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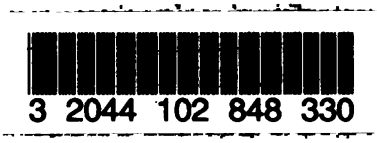
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# ENGLISH HISTORY

AND

# LITERATURE.

## VOL. II.

## THE PERIOD OF THE EARLY PLANTAGENETS.

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"In history a great volume is unrolled for our instruction, drawing the materials of future wisdom from the errors and infirmities of mankind."—BURKE.

"Literature is the thought of thinking souls."—CARLYLE.

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# PREFACE.

We present to the members of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle our second installment of English History and Literature. Those who have read the former volume of this work will understand its plan and purpose; but for the benefit of the several thousand who have joined the Circle since the publication of Volume I. we need only to state that it proposes to present the study of the literature of England side by side with that of its history. The two departments stand in close relation, and no one can become a master of one without understanding the other.

The present volume shows us pictures of England during a very interesting period; the crown of the Middle Ages, with its spirit of knighthood embodied in the Black Prince; the struggle for Scottish liberty led by Wallace and Robert Bruce; and, most important of all in the constitutional history of England, the rise of the Parliament.

We trust that the present work will be found worthy of following its predecessor, and may, by its favorable reception, encourage the preparation of other volumes presenting the annals and the literature of later periods in British history.

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## CHAPTER I.

THE EARLY PLANTAGENETS, 1154–1272.

### I. Preliminary.

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IV. Condition of England at the Beginning of the Period.
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#### I. The Importance of the Epoch.

The period of the Plantagenets marks a great change in the history of the English people. The reign of Stephen, the last of the early Norman kings, exemplifies to us all

the evils of unbridled feudalism: anarchy and confusion; innumerable fortified castles; the peasantry reduced to serfdom; a general paralysis of all organized power except the ecclesiastical. But when the reign of the House of Plantagenet had expired, feudalism was no more; the peasantry were free subjects; and there was a strong central government, with one law made by king and parliament for all classes of the people. It has been well said that the history of England under the Plantagenet kings comprises the history of one of her greatest contributions to the world's progress—the English Constitution.

But the interest of the period is not confined to political history. It was an era, also, in which the English mind was touched by many quickening influences, and the impulse it received was manifest in various departments of human thought. The arts were cultivated and science made some progress. Commerce was greatly extended. The English trading ships reached into the Baltic and also visited the ports of Spain. Chaucer describes the experienced shipmen of these times as knowing well

> "All havens as they were,
> Fro Gothland to the Cape of Finnisterre."

It was during this period that a definite language was attained, and the statute passed directing all pleas in courts of justice to be carried on in English. Toward the close of the period, learned Englishmen began to write for the people in their own language; and the result was a literature which raised a higher and truer standard than had been known before; giving, instead of ballads and rhyming chronicles, the poetry of Chaucer and the prose of Wycliffe.

Above all, there was a distinct movement in favor of a reform in the Christian Church—a grand effort to make

religion "less a thing of the clergy, and more a thing of the people." The beginning of this great work was the giving of the Bible to common Englishmen. For the first time they could search the whole Scriptures, and thus be directly influenced by Christianity as taught by its Founder and apostles.

The influence of this bringing of religion nearer home to the individual conscience of the masses of the people was extraordinary and widespread. We shall see that it led to a gain in civilization of great importance from a social and political, as well as from a religious, point of view.

The following extracts present the views of a few trustworthy historians concerning the political importance of this epoch of English history, with a few casual notices of the general progress of the nation :—

The history of England under the early kings of the great House of Plantagenet unfolds and traces the growth of that constitution which, far more than any other that the world has ever seen, has kept alive the forms and spirit of free government ; which has been the discipline that formed the great free republic of the present day; which was for ages the beacon of true social freedom that terrified the despots abroad and served as a model for the aspirations of hopeful patriots. It is scarcely too much to say that English history during these ages is the history of true political liberty. For, not to forget the services of the Italian republics, or of the German Confederations of the Middle Ages, we cannot fail to see that, in their actual results, they fell as dead before the great monarchies of the sixteenth century as the ancient liberties of Athens had fallen; or, where the spirit survived, as in Switzerland, it took a form in which no great nationality could work. It was in England alone that the problem of national self-government was practically solved ; and although, under the Tudor and Stuart sovereigns, Englishmen themselves ran the risk of forgetting the lesson they had learned, and being robbed of the fruits for which their fathers had labored, the men who restored political consciousness, and who recovered the endangered rights, won their victory by argumentative weapons drawn from the store-house of mediæval En-

glish history, and by the maintenance and realization of the spirit of liberty in forms which had survived from earlier days.—STUBBS.

The period of the Plantagenets forms an important and interesting epoch in English history. Its leading feature is the gradual development of the English Constitution. The first ostensible act in the process is the Great Charter wrung from John. The weak and long reign of Henry III., and the necessities of Edward I., served to foster the infancy of English freedom, whilst the establishment of the commons as a permanent estate of the great council of the nation, forms, in a constitutional point of view, the chief glory of this era of history.—HUME.

In this period was obtained, and fixed forever in the hearts of all who speak the English tongue, the "Great Charter" of English freedom, the word that I believe has a greater hold on the affections of all who inherit the Saxon blood, whether on the banks of the Thames or the Ganges, or of the Hudson and Potomac, than any other that ever proceeded from human life.—WHITE.

With the "Great Charter" commences the history of the English nation. The history of the preceding events is the history of wrongs inflicted and sustained by various tribes, which indeed all dwelt on English ground, but which regarded each other with aversion such as has scarcely ever existed between communities separated by physical barriers. For even the mutual animosity of countries at war with each other is languid when compared with the animosity of nations which, morally separated, are yet locally intermingled. In no country has the enmity of race been carried further than in England. In no country has that enmity been more completely effaced. The stages of the process by which the hostile elements were melted down into one homogeneous mass are not accurately known to us. But it is certain that, when John became king, the distinction between Saxons and Normans was strongly marked, and that before the end of the reign of his grandson it had almost disappeared. In the time of Richard I., the ordinary imprecation of a Norman gentleman was, "May I become an Englishman!" His ordinary form of indignant denial was, "Do you take me for an Englishman?" The descendant of such a gentleman, a hundred years later, was proud of the English name.

The sources of the noblest rivers, which spread fertility over continents, and bear richly-laden fleets to the sea, are to be sought in wild and barren mountain tracts, incorrectly laid down in maps

and rarely explored by travelers. To such a tract the history of our country during the thirteenth century may not unaptly be compared. Sterile and obscure as is that portion of our annals, it is there that we must seek for the origin of our freedom, our prosperity, and our glory. Then it was that the great English people was formed, that the national character began to exhibit those peculiarities which it has ever since retained, and that our fathers became emphatically islanders, islanders not merely in a geographical position, but in their politics, their feelings, and their manners. Then first appeared with distinctness that constitution which has ever since, through all changes, preserved its identity; that constitution of which all the other free constitutions in the world are copies, and which, in spite of some defects, deserves to be regarded as the best under which any great society has ever yet existed during many ages. Then it was that the House of Commons, the archetype of all the representative assemblies which now meet, either in the Old or in the New World, held its first sittings. Then it was that the common law rose to the dignity of a science, and rapidly became a not unworthy rival of the imperial jurisprudence. Then it was that the courage of those sailors who manned the rude barks of the Cinque Ports first made the flag of England terrible on the seas. Then it was that the most ancient colleges which still exist at both the great national seats of learning were founded. Then was formed that language, less musical, indeed, than the languages of the South, but in force, in richness, in aptitude for all the highest purposes of the poet, the philosopher, and the orator, inferior to that of Greece alone. Then, too, appeared the first faint dawn of that noble literature, the most splendid and the most durable of the many glories of England.—MACAULAY.

## II. A GLANCE AT THE MAP OF EUROPE.

The times in which the Plantagenets lived were momentous also as a period in which there were many changes in the political relations of European nations generally; and it will be easier to understand what was going on in England if we take a view of the geographical relations of the nations one to the other. When we look at the western side of the map of France, we must not forget that

Henry II. held nearly the whole of that part of the country from the River Somme down to the Pyrenees.

### ITALY.

Italy was divided between the Normans, who governed Apulia and Sicily, and the sway of the Empire, which under Lothar II.—the emperor who was on the throne when our period begins—had become little more than nominal south of the Alps; the independence of the imperial cities and small principalities, reaching from the Alps to Rome itself, was maintained chiefly by the inability of the Germans to keep, either by administrative organization or by dynastic alliances, a permanent hold upon it. With both the Republican north and the Normanized south the political history of the Plantagenet kings came in constant connection; and even more close and continuous was the relation, through the agency of the Church, with Rome itself. At the opening of the period, Englishmen were not only studying in the universities of Italy, at Salerno, at Bologna, and at Pavia, but were repaying to Italy, in the services of prelates and statesmen, the debt which England had incurred through Lanfranc and Anselm. An Englishman was soon to be pope. The Norman kings chose ministers and prelates of English birth; and the same Norman power of organization which worked in England under Henry I. and Roger of Salisbury, worked in similar line in Sicily under King Roger and his posterity.

### GERMANY.

Looking northward, we see Germany, in the middle of the twelfth century, still administered, although uneasily, under the ancient system of the four nations, Saxony, Franconia, Swabia, and Bavaria; four distinct nationalities which refused permanent combination. This system was, however, in its last decay. Its completeness was every-where broken in upon by the great ecclesiastical principalities which the piety and policy of the emperors had interposed among the great secular states, to break the impulse of aggressive warfare, to serve as models of good order, and to maintain a direct hold in the imperial hands on territories which could not become hereditary in a succession of priests. Not only so; the debatable lands which lay between the great nations were breaking up into minor states: landgraves, margraves, and counts palatine

were assuming the functions of dukes; the dukes, where they could not maintain the independence of kings, were seeing their powers limited and their territories divided. Thus Bavaria was soon to be dismembered to form a duchy of Austria; Saxony was falling to pieces between the archbishops of Cologne and the margraves of Brandenburg; Franconia, between the emperor and the count palatine; Swabia was the portion of the reigning imperial house, the treasury therefore out of which the emperor had to carve rewards for his servants. Between the great house of the Welf in Saxony, Bavaria, and Lombardy, and the Hohenstaufen on the imperial throne and in Franconia and Swabia, subsisted the jealousy which was sooner or later to reach the heart of the empire itself, to supply the force which threw the dislocated provinces into absolute division.

## FRANCE.

Westward was France under Louis VII., divided from Germany by the long, narrow range of the Lotharingian provinces, over which the imperial rule was recognized as nominal only. These provinces formed a debatable boundary line, which had for one of its chief functions the maintenance of peace between the descendants of Hugh Capet and the representatives of the majesty of Charles and Otto; and which served its turn, for between France and the Hohenstaufen empire there was peace and alliance. But many of the provinces which now form part of France were then imperial, and beyond the Rhone and Meuse the king of Paris had no vassals and but uncertain allies. Within his feudal territory, the count of Flanders to the north, the duke of Aquitaine to the south, the duke of Normandy with his claims over Maine and Brittany, cut him off from the sea; and even the little strip of coast between Flanders and Normandy was held by the count of Boulogne, who at the moment was likewise king of England. Yet the kingdom of France was by no means at its deepest degradation. Louis VI. had kept alive the idea of central power, and had obtained for his son the hand of the heiress of Aquitaine; the schemes were already in operation by which the kings were to offer to the provinces a better and firmer rule than they enjoyed under their petty lords, by which fraud and policy were to split up the principalities and attract them fragment by fragment to the central power, and by which even Normandy itself was, in little more

than fifty years, to be recovered; by which a real central government was to be instituted, and the semblance of national unity to be completed by the formation of a distinct national character.

### THE LOW COUNTRIES.

North of France the imperial provinces of Lower Lorraine, and the debatable lands between Lorraine and Saxony, had much the same indefinite character as belonged to the southern parts of the intermediate kingdom. They seldom took part in the work of the empire, although they were nominally part of it, and the stronger emperors enforced their right. But as a rule they were too distant from the center of government to fear much interference, and, enjoying such freedom as they could, they gladly recognized the emperor's sway when they required his help. We shall see the princes of Lorraine taking no small part in the negotiations between England and Germany under Richard and John, but they generally played a game with Flanders, France, and the empire, which has but an indirect bearing on European politics; and we chiefly hear of these lands as furnishing the hordes of mercenary soldiers for the Crusades and internal wars of Europe, until almost suddenly the Flemish cities break upon our eye as centers of commerce and political life.

### SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

Southward lie Spain and Portugal; divided into several small kingdoms between closely allied and kindred kings, all employed in the long crusade of seven centuries against the Moor—a crusade which is now beginning to have hopes of successful issue. Central Spain, on the line of the Tagus, is still in dispute, although Toledo had been taken in 1085, and Saragossa in 1118. Lisbon was taken with the help of the Crusaders in 1147. In each of the Christian states of Spain, free institutions of government, national assemblies, and local self-government, preserved distinct traces of the Teutonic or Gothic origin of the ruling races; and even before the English Parliament grew to completeness, the Cortes of Castile and Aragon were theoretically complete assemblies of the three estates. The growth of Spain is one of the distinct features of our epoch; but it is a growth apart. There are as yet scarcely more than one or two points at which it comes in contact with the general action of Europe.—STUBBS.

## III. The Ecclesiastical System.

In the midst of all runs the history of the struggle between the ecclesiastical and civil powers, which "supplies one continuous clue to the reading of the period, a common ground on which all the actors for a time and from time to time meet." Before we begin the story of the struggle let us consider what there was in the state of the Church that brought it on. Christianity, coming into England out of the Roman Empire, brought along with it those ideas of immunity from secular jurisdiction which led to the recurring conflicts between the Church and the State. And in order clearly to understand what was the nature and what the ground of the immunities claimed by the clergy, we must examine the Roman ecclesiastical system:

The ecclesiastical empire kept itself as free as possible from the civil power in each nation. It considered itself above kings and princes. It was more ancient than any of their thrones and kingdoms. Kings were not secure on their thrones till they had the sanction of the Church. On the other hand, the clergy claimed to be free from prosecution under the criminal laws of the lands they lived in. They struggled to keep their own ecclesiastical laws and their own ecclesiastical courts, receiving authority direct from Rome, and with final appeal not to the crown, but to the pope.

In addition to the parochial clergy, there were orders of monks. The two chief of them were the rival orders of the Dominican and Augustinian monks; and in most towns there were one, two, or half a dozen monasteries and cloisters. So numerous were the monks that they swarmed every-where, and had become, by the favor of the popes, more important and powerful than the parochial clergy.

It is essential to mark what a power this ecclesiastical empire wielded over the nations. The ecclesiastics held in their hands the keys, as it were, not only of heaven but of earth.

They alone baptized; they alone married people, (though unmarried themselves;) they alone could grant a divorce. They had the

charge of men on their death-beds; they alone buried and could refuse Christian burial in the church-yards. They alone had the disposition of the goods of deceased persons. When a man made a will, it had to be proved in their ecclesiastical courts. If men disputed their claims, doubted their teachings, or rebelled from their doctrines, they virtually condemned them to the stake, by handing them over to the civil power, which acted in submission to their dictates. You will see at once how great a power all these things must have given them over the minds, the fears, the happiness, and lives of the people.

The ordinary revenues of the clergy were large. They had a right to tithes; that is, to a tenth part of the produce of the whole land of Christendom. This had belonged to them for hundreds of years. In addition to this they claimed fees for every thing they did.

The monks, according to the rule of their founders, ought to have got their living by begging alms in return for their preachings and their prayers for the living and the dead. But their vow of poverty had not kept them poor. People thought by giving property to them they could save their souls; so rich men, sometimes in their life-time, but oftener on their death-beds, left them large sums of money and estates in land. In spite of laws passed by the civil powers to prevent it, it was said that they had got about a third of the land of Europe into their possession. Thus the revenue and riches of the Church were far larger than that of the kings and princes of Europe.

These were not the sole secrets of their power. From the fact that the clergy were almost the only educated people in Europe, they became the lawyers and diplomatists, envoys, embassadors, ministers, chancellors, and even prime ministers of princes. They were mixed up with the politics of Europe, and the reins of the State, in most countries, were in the hands of ecclesiastics. They received promotion to bishoprics most often in return for such political services.

We cannot fail to see how vast the political power of such an ecclesiastical empire as this must have been. The pope, through his army of ecclesiastics all over Christendom, had the strings in his hand by which to influence the politics of Europe. And one of the great complaints of the best men of the day was that this political influence was used by Rome for her own ends instead of the good of Europe, and that the immense ecclesiastical revenues

tended to flow out of the provinces into the coffers of the popes and cardinals of Rome.—SEEBOHM.

From this general sketch we may pass to a picture of the common clergy of England drawn by Nigellus, a monk of Christ's Church, Canterbury, and a contemporary of Becket. Looking at it, we can understand why the people, though they still feared the power of the clergy, and reverenced their office, felt little respect for them as men.

The bishop has bound himself to be a teacher of his flock. How can he teach those whom he sees but once a year, and not a hundredth part of whom he sees at all? If any one in the diocese wants the bishop, he is told the bishop is at court on affairs of state. He hears a hasty mass once a day, *non sine tædio*, (not without being bored.) The rest of his time he gives to business or pleasure, and is not bored. The rich get justice from him, the poor get no justice. If his metropolitan interferes with him, he appeals to Rome, and Rome protects him if he is willing to pay for it. At Rome the abbot buys his freedom from the control of the bishop; the bishop buys his freedom from the control of the archbishop. The bishops dress as the knights dress. When his cap is on you cannot distinguish him at council from a peer. The layman swears, the bishop swears, and the bishop swears the hardest. The layman hunts, the bishop hunts. The layman hawks, the bishop hawks. Bishop and layman ride side by side into battle. What will not bishops do? Was ever crime more atrocious than that which was lately committed in the Church at Coventry?* When did pagan ever deal with Christian as the bishop did with the monks? I, Nigellus, saw with my own eyes, after the monks were ejected, harlots openly introduced into the cloister and chapter house to lie all night there, as in a brothel, with their paramours. Such are the works of bishops in these days of ours. This is what they do, or permit to be done; and so cheap has grown the dignity of the ecclesiastical order that you will easier find a cowherd well educated than a presbyter, and an industrious duck than a literate parson.—NIGELLUS, as quoted in Froude's *Life and Times of Thomas Becket.*

* "In the year 1191, Hugh, Bishop of Coventry, violently expelled the monks from the cathedral there, and instituted canons in their places."

## IV. State of England at the Beginning of the Period.

We have now to begin the study of English history during the period of constitutional growth; and it will be impossible for us to estimate the progress gained during the era unless we bear in mind the character of the times that preceded it. Two short extracts from chroniclers give us a complete view of the condition of the nation at the close of the earlier period.

Wounded and drained of blood by civil misery, England lay plague-stricken. It was written of an ancient people, "In those days there was no king in Israel, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes;" but in England, under King Stephen, the case was worse. For, because at that time the king was powerless, though some indeed did what seemed right in their own eyes, many, because all fear of king and law was taken off them, did all the more greedily what by their natural instincts they knew to be wrong. Neither king nor empress was able to act in a masterful way, or show vigorous discipline. But each kept their own followers in good temper by refusing them nothing, lest they should desert them. And because they were worn out by daily strife, and acted less vigorously, local disturbances of hostile lords grew the more vehement. Castles, too, rose in great numbers in the several districts, and there were in England, so to speak, as many kings, or rather tyrants, as lords of castles. Individuals took the right of coining their private money and of private jurisdiction.—William of Newburgh.

The following is an extract from the "Saxon Chronicle," and what a picture of desolation it presents:

The nobles and bishops built castles and filled them with devils and evil men. Then they took those men that they imagined had any property, both by night and by day, peasant men and women, and put them in prison for their gold and silver, and tortured them with unutterable torture; for never were martyrs so tortured as they were. They hanged them up by the feet, and smoked them with foul smoke; they hanged them up by the thumbs or by the head, and

hung fires on their feet; they put knotted strings about their heads, and writhed them so that it went to the brain. They put them in dungeons, in which were adders and snakes and toads, and killed them so. Some they put in a "cruset-hûs," that is, in a chest that was short and narrow and shallow, and put sharp stones therein, and pressed the man therein, so that they brake all his limbs. In many of the castles were instruments called a "lâv (loathly) and grim;" these were neck-bonds, of which two or three men had enough to bear one. It was so made, that is, it was fastened to a beam, and they put a sharp iron about the man's throat and his neck, so that he could not in any direction sit or lie or sleep, but must bear all that iron. I neither can nor may tell all the wounds or all the tortures which they inflicted on wretched men in this land; and that lasted nineteen winters while Stephen was king; and ever it was worse and worse. They laid imposts on the towns continually; and when the wretched men had no more to give, they robbed and burned all the towns, so that thou mightest well go all a day's journey and thou shouldest never find a man sitting in a town or the land tilled. Then was corn dear, and flesh and cheese and butter; for there was none in the land. Wretched men died of hunger; some went seeking alms who at one while were rich men; some fled out of the land. Never yet had more wretchedness been in the land, nor did heathen men ever do worse than they did. Every-where, at times, they forebore neither church nor church-yard, but took all the property that was therein, and then burned the church and all together. Nor forebore they a bishop's land, nor an abbot's, nor a priest's, but robbed monks and clerks, and every man another who anywhere could. If two or three men came riding to a town, all the township fled before them, imagining them to be robbers. The bishops and clergy constantly cursed them, but nothing came of it, for they were all accursed and forsworn and lost. However a man tilled, the earth bare no corn; for the land was all foredone by such deeds, and they said openly that Christ and his saints slept.

Such was the condition of England—countless fortified castles, private wars, private coinage, private justice, when Henry II., the first king of the house of Plantagenet, ascended the throne in 1154.

## II. Henry II. and Richard I.

### GUIDE ANALYSIS.

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2. Having reduced the State to order, he turns to the Church.

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## I. Henry II. (Plantagenet.) A. D. 1154–1189.

*Archbishops of Canterbury*—Theobald, 1139–1161; Thomas Becket, 1162–1170; Richard, 1174–1184; Baldwin, 1185–1190.

*Chief Justices*—Robert, Earl of Leicester, 1154–1167; Richard de Lucy, 1154–1179; Ranulf Glanvill, 1180–1189.

*Chancellors*—Thomas Becket, 1154–1162; Ralph de Warneville, 1173–1181; Geoffrey, the king's son, 1181–1189.

With the accession of Henry II. the disorder and oppression under which England had suffered came to an end. He set to work from the very beginning of his reign to secure a strong government and good order. The mercenaries who had flooded the kingdom under Stephen were sent back to their own countries; the castles which had been the strongholds of baronial tyranny were destroyed; a new coinage was issued, of lawful weight and

purity; and justice was secured for the people by the appointment of commissioners to enforce the law which had been so long in abeyance.

Having thus restored order to the nation, Henry began to think of curbing the excessive power of the Church. We have seen that the clergy considered themselves entirely independent of the king's justice; that they might, and did, commit every sort of crime, subject only to spiritual penalties. To Henry, "whose passion was for law and for the enforcement of the same order and justice through every class of society," this was most repugnant. He therefore made a law that, if a priest or monk committed any crime, he should be tried by the king's judge instead of by the bishop. This brings us to the great incident of the period—the struggle between the king and Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, who would not consent to the law. With a view to securing, at the head of the Church, a friend who would help him in his ecclesiastical reforms, Henry had raised Becket to the archbishopric. How sadly he was disappointed we shall learn further on.

It is the history of Thomas Becket, rather than the history of the people, that furnishes the greatest contribution to this period of English history. The following pages will give us an idea of the man and his work:

## LEAVES FROM THE STORY OF THOMAS BECKET.

### THE SARACEN GIRL.

The traditionary history of the family and birth of Thomas Becket is highly romantic and picturesque. His father, Gilbert Becket or Beckie, who was born in London either at the end of the reign of the Conqueror or during the reign of William Rufus, went to the Holy Land during the reign of Henry I. It has been stated, but more upon conjecture than upon any contemporary proof, that he went in the train of some great Norman lord or crusading knight;

but it appears to be quite as probable that he was carried to Palestine by his own devotion and his commercial and enterprising spirit, and that he was a merchant of some substance before he went. Such journeys, undertaken by men of his class, had not been uncommon even in the old Saxon times; they were rather frequent between the time of the Conquest and the time of the first Crusade, and when the Crusaders had obtained by conquest a firm establishment in Palestine, with possession of all the seaports of that country, such journeys certainly became very common. Trade and devotion have often traveled together and thrived together. In all the countries of the East, a good portion of the pilgrims to the holy places were, and still are, traffickers. The shrines, the holy wells, the fountain-heads of rivers, the sacred islands, whether on the Nile or elsewhere, the holy mounts, and all other places that were reputed holy and attracted pilgrims to them, became either the regular seats of commerce, or the scenes of great annual fairs, for the interchange of commodities, often brought from very distant districts and from countries much varying in soil, production, and manufactures.

Perhaps Gilbert Becket, like other merchant-pilgrims from England, may, for the sake of protection, have enrolled himself under the banner of some great Norman knight. While in the Holy Land he had the misfortune to be taken prisoner by the Saracens, who generally made domestic slaves of the captives of their sword. Gilbert is represented as living in a state of slavery in the house of an emir or Mohammedan chief; but, as the romantic story goes, the fair daughter of the emir fell in love with his handsome person and assisted him in making his escape; and when he was gone, finding that she could not live without him, she fled from her father's house and from her own sunny climate, to seek her lover through the unknown countries of the West; and knowing only two words that were intelligible to European ears, her lover's name and the name of his birthplace and home, she repeated wherever she went, "London! London! Gilbert! Gilbert!" Having, after many dangers and strange adventures, reached the English capital, she went from street to street, calling upon Gilbert, and weeping for that she could not find him. Her Eastern dress, her beauty, and her helpless condition, drew crowds around her, and excited the sympathy of some good Londoners; and at last her lover was either found out for her, or he met her in the streets as she was calling his name. Such lasting and heroic love could not go unrewarded,

and Becket, now a very thriving citizen, resolved to make the Syrian maiden his wife. But first she must renounce Mohammed and the Koran. She was speedily converted and baptized, and then married to Gilbert. The story struck the fancy of the artists and illuminators, and the baptism of the fair Syrian and her espousals seem to have been delineated and repeated in a good many old manuscripts. From this romantic marriage proceeded the great Thomas Becket, who was born in London in or about the year 1119.—MACFARLANE.

## RISE OF THOMAS BECKET.

Becket was a very extraordinary man. In whatever he did he acted on Solomon's maxim, and did it with his might. In the first phase of his character he was a secular churchman. He had been trained in the house of his father, a London merchant of Norman blood; he had been schooled in accounts by Master Octonummi; he had learned accomplishments in the hall of Richer de l'Aigle; and then had entered Archbishop Theobald's family as secretary. There, no doubt, he got his knowledge of civil and canon law, and learned the business of a diplomatist. Although Theobald was an ecclesiastical politician of the second stamp, he did not as yet impress that character on Becket. John of Salisbury, who also was Theobald's secretary, took some such impression from him, and shows it in a constant criticism of Becket from the point of view natural to the churchman pure and simple. Still, Becket learned that side of life during these experiences. With this training he was qualified, not only to conduct the negotiations that secured the crown to Henry II., but, when he was made chancellor, as he was at the king's accession, he was able to manage and extend the duties of his office, magnifying it as no other chancellor had done before. The chancellor was a sort of secretary of state for all departments; he was not so powerful in himself, or in his constitutional position, as the justiciar, but he had nearly as much real power through his hold on the king, whose letters he wrote, whose accounts he kept, all whose formal business he recorded, and all whose irksome duties he took off his hands.

### BECKET AS CHANCELLOR.

Thomas Becket was a secular clerk, bound by none of the vows of monastic orders, and, therefore, though he led a strictly pure and self-denying life, he did not consider himself obliged to abstain from worldly business or amusements, and in the year 1155 he was appointed chancellor by Henry II. He was then in his thirty-eighth year, of great ability and cultivation, graceful in demeanor, ready of speech, clear in mind, and his tall frame (reported to have been no less than six feet two in height) fitting him for martial exercise and bodily exertion. The king, a youth of little past twenty, delighting in ability wherever he found it, became much attached to his gallant chancellor, and not only sought his advice in the regulation of England after its long troubles, but when business was done they used to play together like two schoolboys. It must have been a curious scene in the hall of Chancellor Thomas, when at the daily meal earls and barons sat round his table, and knights and nobles crowded so thickly at the others that the benches were not sufficient, and the floor was daily strewn with hay or straw in winter, or in summer with green boughs, that those who sat on it might not soil their robes. Gold and silver dishes and goblets and the richest wines were provided, and the choicest, most costly, viands were purchased at any price by his servants for these entertainments; they even gave a hundred shillings for a dish of eels. But the chancellor seldom touched these delicacies, living on the plainest fare as he sat in his place as the host, answering the pledges of his guests, amusing them with his converse, and providing minstrelsy and sports of all kinds for their recreation. Often the king would ride into the hall in the midst of the gay crowd seated on the floor, throw himself off his horse, leap over the table, and join in the mirth.

These rich feasts afforded afterward plentiful alms for the poor, who were never forgotten in the height of Becket's magnificence, and the widow and the oppressed never failed to find a protector in the chancellor.

His house was full of young squires and pages, the sons of the nobility, who placed them there as the best school of knighthood; and among them was the king's own son, Henry, who had been made his pupil. The king seems to have been very apt to laugh at Becket for his strict life and overflowing charity. One very cold

day, as they were riding, they met an old man in a thin ragged coat. "Poor old man!" cried Henry, "would it not be a charity to give him a good warm cloak?" "It would, indeed," said Becket; "you had better keep the matter in mind." "No, no, it is you that shall have the credit of this great act of charity," said Henry, laughing. "Ha, old man, should you not like this fine warm cloak?" and with these words he began to pull at the scarlet and gray mantle which the chancellor wore. Becket struggled for it, and in this rough sport they were both nearly pulled off their horses, till the cloak gave way, and the king triumphantly tossed his prize to the astonished old man.

The chancellor was in the habit of daily giving more costly gifts than these both to rich and poor; gold and silver, robes and jewels, fine armor and horses, hawks and hounds, even fine new ships, were bestowed by him, from the wealth of the old merchant Gilbert, as well as from the revenues of his archdeaconry, and of several other benefices which the lax opinions of his time caused him to think no shame to keep in his own hands.

We cannot call Thomas Becket by any means a perfect character; but thoroughly conscientious he must ever have been, and very self-denying, keeping himself free from every stain in the midst of the court, and guarding himself by strict discipline. He was found to be in the habit of sleeping on the bare boards beside his rich bed, and in secret he wore sackcloth, and submitted to the lash of penance. His uprightness and incorruptibility as a judge, his wisdom in administering the affairs of State, and his skill in restoring peace to England, made the reign of Henry Plantagenet a relief indeed to his subjects. In almost every respect he lived like a layman. He hunted and hawked, and was found fault with by the Prior of Leicester for wearing a cape with sleeves, which it seems was an unclerical garment. The prior said it was more unsuitable in one who held so many ecclesiastical preferments, and was likely to become Archbishop of Canterbury. To this Thomas answered: "I know of four priests, each of whom I would rather see archbishop than myself. If I had that rank I know full well I must either lose the king's favor, or set aside my duty to God."

The time Becket dreaded came. The good old peaceable Archbishop Theobald died in 1162, and Henry, who was then at Falaise, ordered his chancellor to England, ostensibly to settle a disturbance in the western counties, but in reality, as he declared in a private

interview, that he might be elected to the primacy. Becket smiled, and pointing to his gay robes, said: "You are choosing a pretty dress to figure at the head of your monks at Canterbury. If you do as you say, my lord, you will soon hate me as much as you love me now, for you assume an authority in Church affairs to which I shall not consent, and there will be plenty of persons to stir up strife between us." Henry did not heed the warning, and king, bishops, and the Chapter of Canterbury unanimously chose Becket as archbishop.—MISS YONGE.

### BECKET AS PRIMATE.

When next we see this splendid embassador the cloth of gold is gone; the music is silent; and the glittering train of servants and retainers has shrunk into a few pale priests in robes of brown or gray serge. What is the meaning of so great a change? How does it come that the magnificent man, whom we lately saw the center of a gorgeous procession, surrounded with every thing that betokened luxury and pomp, is now bending his bare knees on a pavement of cold, wet stone, and with his own hands, no longer loaded with heavy golden rings, is washing dirt from the feet of some poor diseased beggars, and drying them with the skirts of his own robe, below which may be seen peeping the edges of a haircloth shirt? This sudden and wonderful change is the result of Becket's elevation to the see of Canterbury. Standing now on the highest pinnacle a churchman can reach in England, he has resolved to change his mode of life entirely, in order to win for himself the fame and honors of a saint.—COLLIER.

The following is a review of his primacy from a Roman Catholic point of view:—

That Becket had still to learn the self-denying virtues of the clerical character is plain from his own confession; that his conduct had always defied the reproach of immorality was confidently asserted by his friends, and is equivalently acknowledged by the silence of his enemies. The ostentatious parade and worldly pursuits of the chancellor were instantly renounced by the archbishop, who, in the fervor of his conversion, prescribed to himself, as a punishment for the luxury and vanity of his former life, a daily course of secret mortification. His conduct was now marked by

the strictest attention to the decencies of his station. To the train of knights and noblemen who had been accustomed to wait on him succeeded a few companions selected from the most virtuous and learned of his clergy. His diet was abstemious; his charities were abundant; his time was divided into certain portions, allotted to prayer and study and the episcopal functions. These he found it difficult to unite with those of the chancellor; and therefore, as at his consecration he had been declared free from all secular engagements, he resigned that office into the hands of the king. This total change of conduct has been viewed with admiration or censure, according to the candor or prejudices of the beholders. By his contemporaries it was universally attributed to a conscientious sense of duty: modern writers have frequently described it as a mere affectation of piety, under which he sought to conceal projects of immeasurable ambition. But how came this hypocrisy, if it existed, to elude, during a long and bitter contest, the keen eyes of his adversaries? A more certain path would certainly have offered itself to ambition. By continuing to flatter the king's wishes, and by uniting in himself the offices of chancellor and archbishop, he might in all probability have ruled without control both in Church and State.—LINGARD.

### BECKET IN HIS LATER PHASE.

A third phase awaits him. In his new character he is pretty sure to quarrel with the king; he does so, and, however just his cause, he does it in a way that does not prejudice us in his favor; his object is studiously to put Henry in the wrong; his conduct in the last degree exasperating. The second form of clerical life has served its time. Now he comes out as a candidate for martyrdom. In this also he will do what he has to do with all his might. Unmindful of the early friendship of the king, from whom certainly he had never met with anything but kindness and the most familiar courtesy, he declares that he is in danger of his life; he insists on celebrating mass at the altar of the protomartyr and on appearing at court carrying his own cross, partly as a safeguard against violence which he has no reason to apprehend, partly in an awful, miserable parody of the great day of Calvary. All the rest of his career is the same—a morbid craving after the honors of martyrdom, or confessorship at the least, a crafty policy for embroiling Henry

with his many enemies, combined with a plausible allegation that it is all for his good and that of the Church. There is in him some greatness of character still, some sincerity we will hope, but no self-renunciation, no self-restraint, no earnest striving for peace; little, very little care of the flock over which he was overseer, and which was left shepherdless.

On a calm review of his life it seems that Becket was most at home in his first position; that in the second he was ill at ease and awkward, divided between two aims and failing in conduct as well as in cause. The third phase becomes him least of all; and it is only by considering the horrible sufferings of his death that we pardon him for the conduct that brought the pains of death upon him.—STUBBS.

The strife between the king and Becket was long and bitter. At last the Constitutions of Clarendon were drawn up to arrange matters. But Becket fled to France, where he remained in exile for some years. On his return the king's wrath was kindled anew against him, and in his passion he spoke words that seemed to show that he wished for the death of the "turbulent priest." Four of the knights who heard these words crossed the sea and made their way to Canterbury. Becket guessed why they had come, but he would not flee again, and waited for them by the altar of the cathedral.

### THE MURDER OF BECKET.

The archbishop was on the fourth step beyond the central pillar ascending into the choir when the knights came in. The outline of his figure may have been just visible to them, if light fell upon it, from candles in the lady chapel. Fitzurse passed to the right of the pillar, De Morville, Tracy, and Le Breton to the left. Robert de Broc and Hugh Mauclerc, another apostate priest, remained at the door by which they entered. A voice cried, "Where is the traitor? Where is Thomas Becket?" There was silence; such a name could not be acknowledged. "Where is the archbishop?" Fitzurse shouted. "I am here," the archbishop replied, descending the steps and meeting the knights full in the face. "What do you

want with me? I am not afraid of your swords. I will not do what is unjust." The knights closed round him. "Absolve the persons whom you have excommunicated," they said, "and take off the suspensions." "They have made no satisfaction," he answered; "I will not." "Then you shall die as you have deserved," they said.

They had not meant to kill him—certainly not at that time and place. One of them touched him on the shoulder with the flat of his sword, and hissed in his ears, "Fly, or you are a dead man." There was still time; with a few steps he would have been lost in the gloom of the cathedral, and could have concealed him in any one of a hundred hiding-places. But he was careless of life, and he felt that his time was come. "I am ready to die," he said. "May the Church through my blood obtain peace and liberty! I charge you in the name of God that you hurt no one here but me." The people from the town were now pouring into the cathedral; De Morville was keeping them back with difficulty at the head of the steps from the choir, and there was danger of a rescue. Fitzurse seized him, meaning to drag him off as a prisoner. He had been calm so far; his pride rose at the indignity of an arrest. "Touch me not, thou abominable wretch!" he said, wrenching his cloak out of Fitzurse's grasp. "Off, thou pander, thou!" Le Breton and Fitzurse grasped him again, and tried to force him upon Tracy's back. He grappled with Tracy and flung him to the ground, and then stood with his back against the pillar, Edward Grim supporting him. Fitzurse, stung by the foul epithet which Becket had thrown at him, swept his sword over him and dashed off his cap. Tracy, rising from the pavement, struck direct at his head. Grim raised his arm and caught the blow. The arm fell broken, and the one friend found faithful sank back disabled against the wall. The sword, with its remaining force, wounded the archbishop above the forehead, and the blood trickled down his face. Standing firmly, with his hands clasped, he bent his neck for the death-stroke, saying in a low voice, "I am prepared to die for Christ and for his Church." These were his last words. Tracy again struck him. He fell forward upon his knees and hands. In that position Le Breton dealt him a blow which severed the scalp from the head and broke the sword against the stone, saying, "Take that for my Lord William." De Broc or Mauclerc—the needless ferocity was attributed to both of them—

strode forward from the cloister door, set his foot on the neck of the dead lion, and spread the brains upon the pavement with his sword's point. "We may go," he said, "the traitor is dead, and will trouble us no more."

Such was the murder of Becket, the echoes of which are still heard across seven centuries of time, and which, be the final judgment upon it what it may, has its place among the most enduring incidents of English history.—FROUDE.

### THE SHRINE OF THOMAS BECKET.

The shrine of Thomas Becket was the chief attraction of pilgrims to Canterbury Cathedral during the Middle Ages; and but for the accident of the murder of the great archbishop here in 1170, this church would never have acquired its fame or its wealth or its lavish artistic decoration. It never would have become the Mecca of the English pilgrims but for this circumstance, nor probably would it have suggested the series of "Tales" in which so many generations have delighted. The murder of Becket was the most momentous and important event that ever occurred in connection with the cathedral; and it is a notorious fact that the monks of Christ's Church converted the ghastly incident into a source of vast revenue and extended popularity. It is no wonder that the shrine and chapel were adorned with splendor, pomp, and parade; nor can we wonder much, considering the customs and the superstitions of the age, that "Canterbury Pilgrimages" were frequent and numerous. The paving stones round the shrine of "St. Thomas the Martyr" are said to bear evidences of the frequency of devotional kneeling by being nearly worn through.

The immense value and ostentatious splendor of Becket's shrine are thus described by Erasmus, who saw it shortly after the dissolution. In a chest or case of wood was "a coffin of gold, together with inestimable riches, gold being the meanest thing to be seen there; it shone all over, and sparkled and glittered with jewels of the most rare and precious kinds and of an extraordinary size, some of them being larger than a goose's egg—most of them being the gifts of monarchs." Stow, in his annals of Henry VIII., describes it more minutely. He states: "It was builded a man's height, all of stone; then, upwards, of timber, plain; within the which was a chest of yron, containing the bones of Thomas Becket, scull and all, with the wound of his death, and the piece cut out of

his scull layde in the same wounde. These bones (by the commandment of the Lord Cromwell) were then and there burnt. The timber-work of this shrine on the outside was covered with plates of gold; damasked with gold weir, which grounde of gold was again covered with jewels of golde, as rings ten or twelve cramptd with gold wyre into the sayde ground of gold, many of those ringes having stones in them; broaches, images, angels, pretious stones, and great orient pearles. The spoil of which shrine in gold and pretious stones filled two great chests, such as six or seaven strong men could doe no more than convey one of them at once out of the church."—ABBEY'S *Castles and Ancient Halls of England and Wales.*

## III. THE LATTER YEARS OF HENRY II.

When the news of the catastrophe at Canterbury was brought to King Henry, he was momentarily paralyzed. He knew that he had used words which his enemies would construe into a sanction of this brutal murder. Immediately, therefore, he sent envoys to Rome to explain what had happened, and to promise any terms for absolution. The conditions which would satisfy the cardinals were a solemn oath of innocence, and a promise that he would renounce the Constitutions of Clarendon. To these terms he submitted and was absolved. But Henry was not yet delivered from the consequences of his struggle with Becket. A conspiracy had been formed against him under the shelter of Becket's name, and though the pope no longer sanctioned it, the purpose was too deeply laid to be lightly surrendered. Shortly there was an insurrection throughout all his dominions. Under the influence of Louis of France the sons rose against the father, the king of Scotland made common cause with them, and the great earls whose territories covered the middle of England joined in the general alliance. Queen Eleanor, too, associated herself openly with the combination formed for her husband's humiliation. For a time it seemed as if Henry must be

overwhelmed, but the English people stood by him and he was victorious; William the Lion was defeated and made prisoner at Alnwick; the midland earls were entirely humiliated; peace was made with Louis, and Henry and his sons were for a time reconciled. But he was never after this time a happy man; the sons, whom he loved far more than they deserved, remained undutiful, his wife was a prisoner, and his own life sadly changed from its first promise. At last, his son Richard again joined the King of France in a war against his father, and forced him to make a humiliating peace. By this last rebellion the king's power was seriously impaired and his heart broken.

### DEATH OF HENRY II.

Henry was worn out with illness and fatigue—he would, he said, lie down and die; at night he would not be undressed; Geoffrey* threw his cloak on him and watched by his side. In the morning the king declared that he could not leave Anjou; Geoffrey was to go on to Alençon with the troops. He would return to Chinon. Geoffrey was not allowed to depart until the Steward of Normandy had sworn that, should the king die, he would surrender the castles only to John; for Henry did not yet know the treachery of his favorite child. All was done as he bade; Geoffrey secured Alençon, and then returned to look for his father; he found him at a place called Savigny, and took him to Chinon, as he wished. For a fortnight Philip pursued his conquests unimpeded. Henry moved again to Saumur, and was there visited by the Counts of Champagne; but he had neither energy, nor, apparently, even the will, to strike a blow or to come to a decision that would insure peace. A conference was fixed for June 30, at Azai, but when the day came Henry was too ill to attend; and Philip and Richard went off loudly exclaiming that it was a false excuse. The same day Philip came to Tours. Again the princes interfered; but Philip would not listen. On July 3 he took the city. Then Henry, dying as he was, made his last effort; he was carried from Saumur to

* Geoffrey was a son of Henry, by Rosamond, the daughter of Walter Clifford, a baron of Herefordshire.—DICETO.

Azai, mounted there on horseback, and met his two foes on the plain of Colombieres.

There, after two attempts to converse, broken by a terrible thunder-storm, Henry, held up on horseback by his servants, accepted Philip's terms and submitted, surrendering all that he was asked to surrender. One thing he asked for: the list of the conspirators to whom he was obliged to promise forgiveness. The list was given him; and with reluctance and muttered reproaches, perhaps curses also, he gave Richard the kiss of peace. He went back to Azai, still transacting some little business on the way, for the monks of Canterbury, who had quarreled with their archbishop, forced themselves into his presence and provoked some sharp words of reproof even then. Then he opened the list of rebels, and the first name that he saw was John's. And that broke his heart; he turned his face to the wall and said, "I have nothing left to care for; let all things go their way."

From that blow he never rallied. He was carried on a litter to Chinon, chafing against the shame of defeat and the mortification of his love. Geoffrey sat by him, fanning him in the sultry air and driving away the flies that teased him. To him Henry confided his last wishes. He told him he was to be archbishop of York, and gave him his ring, with the seal of the panther, to give to the king of Castile; then he ordered them to take him up, and lay him before the altar of the castle chapel; there he received the last sacraments and died, two days after the meeting at Colombieres.

There is hardly, in all English history, a more striking catastrophe or a scene in itself more simply touching. So much suffering, so great a fall, from such grandeur to such humiliation, such bitter sorrow, the loss of everything worth having, power and peace and his children's love, may have stirred in him in that last moment the thought of forgiveness. But Richard saw him alive no more; and when at the funeral, at Font Evraud, he met the bier on which his father's body lay, blood flowed from the nostrils of the dead king, as if his spirit were indignant at his coming.*—STUBBS.

### VIEWS OF THE WORK AND CHARACTER OF HENRY II.

The following selections present specimens of some of the things that have been said about King Henry. The first is

* These details are to be found in Giraldus Cambrensius, and in Hovedon.

from Peter of Blois, a contemporary of the king, who knew more of him than any other who has written about him, and who has left us a sketch of his appearance and character more than usually distinct. Then follows a review of Henry's character written by a defender of the Church; a summary of his work from the pen of one whose research and candor are unquestionable; and lastly we have the opinion of a contemporary historian who hated the king.

You are aware that his complexion and hair were a little red, but the approach of old age has altered this somewhat, and the hair is turning gray. He is of middle size, such that among short men he seems tall, and even among tall ones not the least in stature. His head is spherical, as if it were the seat of great wisdom and the special sanctuary of deep schemes. In size it is such as to correspond well with the neck and whole body. His eyes are round, and, while he is calm, dove-like and quiet, but when he is angry, they flash fire and are like lightning. His hair is not grown scant, but he keeps it well cut. His face is lion-like, and almost square. His nose projects in a degree proportionate to the symmetry of his whole body. His feet are arched; his shins like a horse's; his broad chest and brawny arms proclaim him to be strong, active, and bold. In one of his toes, however, part of the nail grows into the flesh, and increases enormously, to the injury of the whole foot. His hands, by their coarseness, show the man's carelessness; he wholly neglects all attention to them, and never puts a glove on, except he is hawking. He every day attends mass, councils, and other public business, and stands on his feet from morning till night. Though his shins are terribly wounded and discolored by constant kicks from horses, he never sits down except on horseback, or when he is eating. In one day, if need requires, he will perform four or five regular days' journeys, and by these rapid and unexpected movements often defeats his enemies' plans. He uses straight boots, a plain hat, and a tight dress. He is very fond of field sports, and, if he is not fighting, amuses himself with hawking and hunting. He would have grown enormously fat if he did not tame his tendency to belly by fasting and exercise. In mounting a horse and riding he preserves all the lightness of

youth, and tires out the strongest men by his excursions almost every day. For he does not, like other kings, lie idle in his palace, but goes through his provinces examining into every one's conduct, and particularly that of the persons whom he has appointed judges of others. No one is shrewder in council, readier in speaking, more self-possessed in danger, more careful in prosperity, more firm in adversity. If he once forms an attachment to a man he seldom gives him up; if he has once taken a real aversion to a person, he seldom admits him afterward to any familiarity. He has forever in his hands bows, swords, hunting-nets, and arrows, except he is at council or at his books; for as often as he can get breathing time from his cares and anxieties he occupies himself with private reading, or, surrounded by a knot of clergymen, he endeavors to solve some hard question. Your king knows literature well, but ours is much more deeply versed in it. I have had opportunities of measuring the attainments of each in literature; for you know that the king of Sicily was my pupil for two years. He had learnt the rudiments of literature and versification, and by my industry and anxiety reached afterward to fuller knowledge. As soon, however, as I left Sicily, he threw away his books, and gave himself up to the usual idleness of palaces. But in the case of the king of England, the constant conversation of learned men and the discussion of questions makes his court a daily school. No one can be more dignified in speaking, more cautious at table, more moderate in drinking, more splendid in gifts, more generous in alms. He is pacific in heart, victorious in war, but glorious in peace, which he desires for his people as the most precious of earthly gifts. It is with a view to this that he receives, collects, and dispenses such an immensity of money. He is equally skillful and liberal in erecting walls, towers, fortifications, moats, and places of inclosure for fish and birds. His father was a very powerful and noble count, and did much to extend his territory, but he has gone far beyond his father, and has added the dukedoms of Normandy, of Aquitaine, and Brittany, the kingdoms of England, Scotland, [?] Ireland, and Wales, so as to increase, beyond all comparison, the titles of his father's splendor. No one is more gentle to the distressed, more affable to the poor, more overbearing to the proud. It has always, indeed, been his study, by a certain carriage of himself like a deity, to put down the insolent, to encourage the oppressed, and to repress the swellings of pride by continual and

deadly persecution. Although, by the customs of the kingdom, he has the chief and most influential part in elections, [of bishops,] his hands have always been pure from any thing like venality. But these excellent gifts of mind and body with which nature has enriched him I can but briefly touch. I profess my own incompetence to describe them—and believe that Cicero or Virgil would labor in vain.—PETER OF BLOIS.

He was eloquent, affable, facetious; uniting with the dignity of the prince the manners of the gentleman; but under this fascinating outside he concealed a heart that could descend to the basest artifices, and sport with its own honor and veracity. No one could believe his assertions or trust his promises; yet he justified this habit of duplicity by the maxim, that it is better to repent of words than of facts, to be guilty of falsehood than to fail in a favorite pursuit. Though possessed of ample dominions, and desirous of extending them, he never obtained the laurels of a conqueror. His ambition was checked by his caution. Even in the full tide of his prosperity he would stop to calculate the chances against him, and frequently plunged himself into real, to avoid imaginary, evils. Hence the characteristic feature of his policy was delay; a hasty decision could not be recalled, but he persuaded himself that procrastination would allow him to improve every advantage which accident might offer. In his own dominions he wished, says a contemporary, to concentrate all power in his own person. He was jealous of every species of authority which did not emanate from himself, and which was not subservient to his will. His pride delighted in confounding the most haughty of his nobles and depressing the most powerful families. He abridged their rights, divided their possessions, and married their heiresses to men of inferior rank. He was careful that his favorites should owe every thing to himself, and gloried in the parade of their power and opulence, because they were of his own creation. But if he was a bountiful master he was a most vindictive enemy. His temper could not brook contradiction. Whoever hesitated to obey his will, or presumed to thwart his desires, was marked out for his victim, and was pursued with the most unrelenting vengeance. His passion was said to be the raving of a madman, the fury of a savage beast. We are told that in its paroxysms his eyes were spotted with blood, his countenance seemed to flame, his tongue poured a torrent of abuse and imprecation, and his hands were em-

ployed to inflict vengeance on whatever came within his reach; and that on one occasion when Humet, a favorite minister, had ventured to offer a plea in justification of the king of Scots, Henry, in a burst of passion, called Humet a traitor, threw down his cap, ungirt his sword, tore off his clothes, pulled the silk coverlet from his couch, and, unable to do more mischief, sat down and gnawed the straw on the floor. Hence the reader will perceive that pride, passion, caution, and duplicity formed the distinguishing traits in his character.—LINGARD.

He was faithful to the letter of his engagements. He recovered the demesne right of the crown, so that his royal dignity did not depend for maintenance on constant taxation. He restored the usurped estates; he destroyed the illegal castles and the system which they typified; he maintained the royal hold on the lawful ones, and the equality and uniformity of justice which their usurpers had subverted; he restored internal peace, and with it plenty, as the riches of England in the following reign amply testify. He arranged the administration of justice by enacting good laws and appointing faithful judges. He restored the currency; he encouraged commerce; he maintained the privileges of the towns; and, without encouraging an aggressive spirit, armed his people for self-defense. He sustained the form, and somewhat of the spirit, of national representation. The clergy had grounds of complaint against him for very important reasons; but their chief complaints were caused by their preference for the immunities of their class to the common safeguard of justice.—STUBBS.

If God had but elected King Henry to grace, and converted him to a right understanding of the privileges of his Church, he would have been an incomparable prince.—GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIUS.

### JUDICIAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES.

Before we approach the history of this period on the constitutional side, let us read what one of our recent historians has said of the study of Constitutional History:

The study of Constitutional History is essentially a tracing of causes and consequences: the examination of a distinct growth from a well-defined germ to full maturity; a growth, the particular direction of which is due to a diversity of causes, but whose life

and developing power lies deep in the very nature of the people. It is not, then, the collection of a multitude of facts and views, but a piecing of the links of a perfect chain. And in this comparatively complete and intelligible connection of cause and consequence, it has a certain charm that makes up for the default of every thing depending on the play of personal character, the unlooked for, and the picturesque.

It is of the greatest importance that this study should become a recognized part of English education. No knowledge of English history can be really sound without it.

### THE CURIA REGIS.

The highest judicial court under the Norman kings was called the King's Court or Curia Regis, and was composed of the bishops, barons, and chief officers of the State. On ordinary occasions the judges in this court were the chief justiciary, the chancellor, the treasurer, and other great officers. The lesser courts were the same as in Saxon times, only they were subject to the Curia Regis. In course of time it was found necessary to divide the King's Court: so the Court of Exchequer was formed in the reign of Henry I., the Court of King's Bench in the reign of Henry II., and that of Common Pleas in the reign of Richard I. The Court of Exchequer decided all causes relating to the royal revenue; it was so called from the chequered cloth, resembling a chess-board, which, covered the table there, and on which, when certain of the king's accounts were made up, the sums were marked and scored by counters. The Court of King's Bench heard principally criminal causes, and such as related to the controlling of inferior courts; it received its name because the king used to sit there in person. The Court of Common Pleas, or common complaints, was for trials of disputes between subject and subject.

In 1176 A.D. the kingdom was divided into six circuits, and three justices appointed to each, in order to save suitors the trouble and expense of attending the King's Court. These officers were called the Justices in Eyre, or itinerant justices.

### THE GRAND ASSIZE.

The Grand Assize was another institution of this reign. Since the Conquest, disputes about the ownership of land had been usually

settled by the duel; but Henry II. introduced the Grand Assize, by which disputants might decide their case, if they chose to do so, instead of by wager of battle. According to this institution, the sheriff summoned four knights of the county or neighborhood, who were to elect twelve others from the district, and these sixteen were to declare upon oath with whom the right of the disputed property lay. The present "grand jury" sprang from this custom.

### SCUTAGE.

Scutage, or escuage, was a money payment to the king instead of personal service. According to the ancient English law every freeman was bound to serve in arms for the defense of his country. That principle Henry only meddled with so far as to direct and improve it. But, according to the feudal custom, quite irrespective of this, every man who held land to the amount of twenty pounds' worth of annual value was obliged to perform or furnish the military service of a knight to his immediate lord. This kept the barons always at the head of bodies of trained knights, who might be regarded as ultimately a part of the king's army, but in case of a rebellion would probably fight for their immediate lord. Henry, by allowing his vassals to commute their military service for a money payment, went a long way to disarm this very untrustworthy body; and with the money so raised he hired stipendiaries, with whom he fought his continental wars. He began to act on this principle in the first year of his reign, when he made the bishops, notwithstanding strong objections from Archbishop Theobald, pay scutage for their lands held by knight-service. But in 1159 he extended the plan very widely, and took money instead of service from the whole of his dominions, compelling his chief lords to serve in person, but hiring with the scutages of the inferior tenants a splendid army of mercenaries, with which he fought the war of Toulouse.

By thus disarming the feudal potentates, and forcing his judges into their courts, he completed the process by which he intended to humiliate them. Feudalism in England, after the reign of Henry II., never reared its head so high as to be again formidable.

## IV. Richard I. A. D. 1189–1199.

*Archbishops of Canterbury.*—Baldwin, 1185–1190; Reginald Fitz-Jocelin, 1191; Hubert Walter, 1193–1205.

*Chief-Justices.*—Hugh, Bishop of Durham, and William, Earl of Essex, 1189; Hugh, Bishop of Durham, and William Longchamp, Bishop of Ely, 1190; Walter of Coutances, Archbishop of Rouen, 1191–1193; Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1194–1198; Geoffrey Fitz-Peter, Earl of Essex, 1198–1199.

*Chancellors.*—William Longchamp, Bishop of Ely, 1189–1197; Eustace, Bishop of Ely, 1197–1199.

Richard succeeded his father as king of England. A few months after his accession he set out for the Holy Land with all the English soldiers he could muster and all the English money he could collect, and only once again visited his realm. During his absence the kingdom was administered by four successive justiciars:—William Longchamp, Walter of Coutances, Hubert Walter, and Geoffrey Fitz-Peter, whose action was that of practical sovereignty. Under their administration the reign of Richard was a period, internally, of quiet growth.

Although nearly all Richard's personal career is unconnected with England, it has its own interest and value as connecting English history with one of the most interesting parts of crusading history. We will therefore leave England for a while, to follow Richard.

### RICHARD THE CRUSADER.

Richard was so brave and strong that he was called Lion-heart; he was very noble and good in some ways, but his fierce, passionate temper did him a great deal of harm. He, and King Philip of France, and several other great princes, all met in the island of Sicily, in the Mediterranean Sea, and thence sailed for the Holy Land. The lady whom Richard was to marry came to meet him in Sicily. Her name was Berengaria; but, as it was Lent, he did not marry her then. She went on to the Holy Land in a ship with his

sister Joan, and tried to land in the island of Cyprus; but the people were inhospitable, and would not let them come. So Richard, in his great anger, conquered the isle, and was married to Berengaria there.

The Mohammedans, who held Palestine at that time, were called Saracens, and had a very brave prince at their head, named Saladin, which means Splendor of Religion. He was very good, just, upright, and truth-telling, and his Saracens fought so well that the Crusaders would hardly have won a bit of ground if the Lion-heart had not been so brave. At last they did take one city on the coast, named Acre; and one of the princes, Leopold, duke of Austria, set up his banner on the walls. Richard did not think it ought to be there; he pulled it up and threw it down into the ditch, asking the duke how he durst take the honors of a king. Leopold was sullen, and brooded over the insult, and King Philip thought Richard so overbearing that he could not bear to be in the army with him any longer. In truth, though Philip had pretended to be his friend, and had taken his part against his father, that was really only to hurt King Henry; he hated Richard quite as much, or more, and only wanted to get home first in order to do him as much harm as he could while he was away. So Philip said it was too hot for him in the Holy Land, and made him ill. He sailed back to France, while Richard remained, though the climate really did hurt his health, and he often had fevers there. When he was ill Saladin used to send him grapes and do all he could to show how highly he thought of so brave a man. Once Saladin sent him a beautiful horse; Richard told the Earl of Salisbury to try it, and no sooner was the earl mounted than the horse ran away with him to the Saracen army. Saladin was very much vexed, and was afraid it would be taken for a trick to make the English king a prisoner, and he gave the earl a quieter horse to ride back with. Richard fought one terrible battle at Joppa with the Saracens, and then he tried to go on to take Jerusalem; but he wanted to leave a good strong castle behind him at Ascalon, and set all his men to work to build it up. When they grumbled he worked with them, and asked the duke to do the same; but Leopold said gruffly that he was not a carpenter or a mason. Richard was so provoked that he struck him a blow, and the duke went home in a rage.

So many men had gone home that Richard found his army was not strong enough to try to take Jerusalem. He was greatly

grieved, for he knew it was his own fault for not having shown the temper of a Crusader; and when he came to the top of a hill whence the Holy City could be seen, he would not look at it, but turned away saying, "They who are not worthy to win it are not worthy to behold it." It was of no use for him to stay with so few men; besides, tidings came from home that King Philip and his own brother, John, were doing all the mischief they could. So he made a peace for three years between the Saracens and Christians, hoping to come back again after that to rescue Jerusalem. But on his way home there were terrible storms; his ships were scattered, and his own ship was driven up into the Adriatic Sea, where he was robbed by pirates or sea-robbers, and then was shipwrecked. There was no way for him to get home but through the lands of Leopold of Austria; so he pretended to be a merchant, and set out attended only by a boy. He fell ill at a little inn, and while he was in bed the boy went into the kitchen with the king's glove in his belt. It was an embroidered glove, such as merchants never used, and the people asked questions, and guessed that the boy's master must be some great man. The duke of Austria heard of it, sent soldiers to take him, and shut him up as a prisoner in one of his castles. Afterward the duke gave him up for a large sum of money to the emperor of Germany. All this time Richard's wife and mother had been in great sorrow and fear, trying to find out what had become of him. It is said that he was found at last by his friend, the minstrel Blondel. A minstrel was a person who made verses and sung them. Many of the nobles and knights in Queen Eleanor's Duchy of Aquitaine were minstrels—and Richard was a very good one himself, and amused himself in his captivity by making verses. This is certainly true—though I cannot answer for it that the pretty story is true which says that Blondel sung at all the castle courts in Germany till he heard his master's voice take up and reply to his song.

The queens, Eleanor and Berengaria, raised a ransom—that is, a sum of money to buy his freedom—though his brother John tried to prevent her, and the king of France did his best to hinder the emperor from releasing him. But the pope insisted that the brave crusader should be set at liberty; and Richard came home after a year and a half of captivity. He freely forgave John for all the mischief he had done, or tried to do, though he thought so ill of him as to say, "I wish I may forget John's injuries to me as soon as he will forget my pardon of him."

Richard only lived two years after he came back. He was besieging a castle in Aquitaine, where there was some treasure that he thought was unlawfully kept from him, when he was struck in the shoulder by a bolt from a cross-bow, and the surgeons treated it so unskillfully that in a few days he died. The man who had shot the bolt was made prisoner, but the Lion-heart's last act was to command that no harm should be done to him. The soldiers, however, in their grief and rage for the king, did put him to death in a cruel manner.

Richard desired to be buried at the feet of his father, in Fontevraud Abbey, where he had once bewailed his undutiful conduct, and now wished his body forever to lie in penitence. The figures, in stone, of the father, mother, and son, who quarreled so much in life, all lie on one monument now, and with them Richard's youngest sister Joan, who died nearly at the same time as he died, partly of grief for him.—MISS YONGE.

### VIEWS OF RICHARD'S CHARACTER.

Geoffrey de Vinsauf, an eye-witness of "those furious assaults which the army of Saladin made upon the Christians, and of the firmness with which the lion-hearted Richard withstood and repulsed them," has left us the following description of the character and appearance of the king:—

King Richard had the valor of Hector, the magnanimity of Achilles, and was equal to Alexander, and not inferior to Roland in valor; nay, he outshone many illustrious characters of our own times. The liberality of a Titus was his, and, which is so rarely found in a soldier, he was gifted with the eloquence of Nestor and the prudence of Ulysses; and he showed himself pre-eminent in the conclusion and transaction of business, as one whose knowledge was not without active goodwill to aid it, nor his goodwill wanting in knowledge. Who, if Richard was accused of presumption, would not readily excuse him? knowing him for a man who never knew defeat; impatient of an injury, and impelled irresistibly to vindicate his rights, though all he did was characterized by innate nobleness of mind. Success made him better fitted for action; Fortune ever favors the bold, and though she

works her pleasure on whom she will, Richard was never to be overwhelmed by adversity. He was tall of stature, graceful in figure; his hair between red and auburn; his limbs were straight and flexible; his arms rather long, and not to be matched for wielding the sword or for striking with it; and his long legs suited the rest of his frame; while his appearance was commanding, and his manners and habits suitable; and he gained the greatest celebrity, not more from his high birth than from the virtues that adorned him. But why need we take much labor in extolling the fame of so great a man? He needs no superfluous commendation, for he has a sufficient meed of praise, which is the sure companion of great actions.

Here is a view of the king's character as quoted by Roger Hovedon from a contemporary writer:

Valor, avarice, crime, unbounded lust, foul famine, unscrupulous pride, and blind desire, have reigned for twice five years; all these an archer did with art, hand, weapon, strength, lay prostrate.

In many respects a striking parallel presents itself between this ancient king of England and Charles XII. of Sweden. They were both inordinately desirous of war, and rather generals than kings. Both were rather fond of glory than ambitious of empire. Both of them made and deposed sovereigns. They both carried on their wars at a distance from home. They were both made prisoners by a friend and ally. They were both reduced by an adversary inferior in war, but above them in the arts of rule. After spending their lives in remote adventures, each perished at last near home, in enterprises not suited to the splendor of their former exploits. Both died childless; and both, by the neglect of their affairs, and the severity of their government, gave their subjects provocation and encouragement to revive their freedom. In all these respects the two characters were alike; but Richard fell as much short of the Swedish hero in temperance, chastity, and equality of mind, as he exceeded him in wit and eloquence. Some of his sayings are the most spirited that we find in that time; and some of his verses remain, which, in a barbarous age, might have passed for poetry.—BURKE.

In spite of the lays of troubadours and stories of romancers, the sober historian must confess that Richard of the lion's heart, or

Cœur-de-lion, as he is called, though an excellent hand at breaking heads, was an unnatural and rebellious son, an injudicious general, and a harsh and cruel king.—WHITE.

### ROBIN HOOD.

There was a man connected with the reign of Richard whose name was very dear to the lower orders of English people. He was the hero of many old popular tales and ballads, which have been handed down to our day. His name was Robin Hood, and he personified to "thousands in England the spirit of liberty in arms against the cruel forest laws, against all tyrannies of the strong in Church and State, against all luxury fed on the spoils of labor." The Robin Hood story here given comprises the principal features in his romantic career. The picturesque details are not to be taken as strictly historical.

A man of noble family, who in later life claimed to be Earl of Huntingdon, was born about 1160 at Locksley in Nottinghamshire. His real name was Robert Fitzooth, but the familiar talk of the country-side converted this into Robin Hood. Burdened with debts, into which his free style of living had led him, and embroiled in a fray, in which he shot a man, he took to a life in the woods, and supported himself and the band of lawless spirits that gathered round him to the number of one hundred by killing deer and robbing all the rich travelers that passed through the forest. It was then punishable by death to kill the king's deer. But, dressed in Lincoln green, with their six-foot bows of yew and arrows of an ell in length, these bold outlaws lived in the great forests of Sherwood in Nottinghamshire and Barnsdale in Yorkshire, defying the sheriff, robbing fat bishops and abbots, and aiding poor widows and other persons on whom the oppressor's hand was laid heavily. We must not regard Robin as a common robber, although his example is not one that can be held up for imitation in these days. He must be looked upon rather as one of those proud nobles whom the grinding oppression of the Norman rulers had driven to a lawless life. His chief adherents were Little John, Will Scadlock or Scarlet, George-a-Green, Much the Miller's son,

and Friar Tuck. In seeking recruits his plan was this: when he heard of a very stout fighter or good shot, he went in disguise to the place where this man was to be met, and there managed to pick a quarrel with him. If the prowess of his foe satisfied him, he tried to add him to the number of his band. And thus he got many a beating with fist and quarter-staff before he secured certain of his best men. His own skill in archery was surprising. He could shoot an arrow to the distance of a mile, a fact which he proved one day, after dining with an abbot of Whitby, by going to the top of the abbey and discharging a shaft. It fell at the distance of a full measured mile. And then his aim was so perfect that he never failed to split a willow wand set up at the distance of a couple of hundred yards. In winter Robin and his men probably scattered themselves among the neighboring cottages; although it may have been that they built comfortable huts for themselves, in which they defied rain, wind, and frost.

Among those who profited by the chivalrous help of Robin was Sir Richard of the Lee, a knight whose castle stood just within the borders of the wood. One day the knight, riding slow and sad through the forest glades, is brought to Robin by three of the men, and is treated to a luxurious dinner, in which swans, pheasants, numble-pie, (that is, pie made of deers' entrails,) figure largely, while bread, wine, and ale are in plentiful store. After dinner the knight tells a sorrowful story of how his son had killed a man, and how his estate had therefore come to be mortgaged to a rich abbot for £400. Instead of robbing the poor knight, Robin gives him this sum, providing him also with clothes, arms, and a horse. The abbot is paid and the land saved. And by-and-by Sir Richard makes a present to his benefactor of a hundred bows and a hundred sheaves of arrows, an ell long, feathered with peacocks' plumes, and notched with solid silver.

Once Robin incurred a great risk of capture at Nottingham, whither he went to compete at a shooting match proclaimed by the sheriff. He wore a dress of red, lest the Lincoln green might betray him. But his shooting soon placed him so high above all the marksmen there, that with one accord the cry of "Robin Hood" broke from the surrounding crowd; and instead of receiving the prize, which was a silver arrow with point and feathers of gold, the outlaw was near getting a score of arrows in his breast from the sheriff's men. However, he managed to escape to the

place where his men lay in ambush, and some skirmishing followed, in which Little John received a wound in the knee. Much took the hurt man on his back and retreated with him, often stopping to launch a shaft at the enemy, until the friendly castle of Sir Richard received the band. This stronghold was then besieged. The sheriff seized Sir Richard one day as he was out hawking; but Robin rushed to the rescue and shot the sheriff, whose head he cut off.

The reigning king seems to have paid Robin a visit in disguise, and to have been delighted with the good cheer and good company to be found under the shadow of the linden-trees. In the shooting match arranged for the royal diversion, every one that missed was punished with a box on the ear, administered with all the hitter's might. In this sport the king and Robin interchanged buffets, which did discredit to the training of neither court nor greenwood, for each fell sprawling before the sledge-like action of the other's fist.

How Robin dealt with a certain bishop of Hereford may be given as a specimen of his usual treatment of such personages. Being told by his scouts that the bishop was coming, Robin and a few of his men put on shepherds' dresses and went shooting at the deer in a place past which he rode. He approached on his richly caparisoned palfrey, which paced steadily along under his well fed person, and, when he saw some common fellows, as he thought, killing the deer, he stopped and shouted out, "Ha, knaves, what are you doing there?" and then sent some of his attendants to arrest them for such daring poaching. They pretended to be in a great fright, and went a little way with their captors, when Robin suddenly blew three blasts on his bugle, and out of every glade came running men in green with white bows ready bent in their hands. Then the bishop knew that he had fallen into a trap, and begged earnestly for pardon. Robin made his men prepare a fine dinner, and, when it was over, called on the bishop to pay the reckoning. Seeing his unwillingness, one of the foresters then spread a cloak on the grass, and emptied on it the contents of the prelate's money-bags—£300 in all, which were divided among the band. Before the bishop, off whom all his fine clothes were stripped, was permitted to go, he was made to dance in his boots for the amusement of his roaring hosts, or was tied to a tree and made to sing.

Piteously, but with great poetic beauty, the ballads of old England depict the death of Robin. Feeling, at the age of eighty-seven, that the toil and exposure of his woodland life were at last beginning to tell upon his strength, he went to the Convent of Kirkby, of which his own cousin was prioress, and begged of her to bleed him, as he did not feel at all well. Ladies then did nearly all the doctoring of the time. Taking him into a quiet room, she opened the veins of his arm with a sharp knife, and then, going out, she locked the door and left him to bleed to death. When he found that she had treated him in this way, and that he could not stop the blood, he tried to climb to the window, but fell back half fainting on the floor. He then raised his horn to his pallid lips and blew three faint and weary blasts. No ear but that of Little John heard the feeble notes; but he, suspecting something wrong, ran to the convent and broke open all the doors, until he found his chief lying at the gasp of death. Robin had just strength enough to beg that his faithful friend would raise him to the level of the window and give him his trusty bow, that he might shoot one arrow more before he died, adding as a last request that he might be buried where the shaft fell. It was a short and nerveless flight that Robin's last arrow took. Exhausted by the effort, he sank back and died with his bow in his clenched hand.—COLLIER.

The choice of Robin's grave is thus told in an old ballad:

"Give me my bent bow in my hand,
And a broad arrow I'll let flee;
And where this arrow is taken up
There shall my grave digg'd be!

"Lay me a green sod under my head,
And another at my feet;
And lay my best bow by my side,
Which was my music sweet;
And make my grave of gravel and green,
Which is most right and meet.

"Let me have length and breadth enough,
With a green sod under my head,
That they may say when I am dead,
Here lies bold Robin Hood."

These words they readily promised him,
Which did bold Robin please;
And there they buried bold Robin Hood,
Near to the fair Kirkleys.

## CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES.

The only benefits which the nation received in return for the immense sums with which it furnished the king in his expedition to Palestine, for his ransom from captivity, and in support of his wars in France, were two legislative charters. By one of these he established uniformity of weights and measures throughout the kingdom; by the other he mitigated the severity of the law of wrecks. Formerly it had been held that, in cases of shipwreck, unless the vessel were repaired by the survivors within a given time, it became, with the cargo, the property of the crown, or of the lord of the manor having right of wreck. The injustice of this custom was mitigated by Henry I., who exempted from forfeiture every ship from which a single mariner or passenger had escaped alive; but after his death, under the pretense that the consent of the baronage had not been obtained, the ancient claim was revived, and exercised till Henry II. enacted that if even a beast escaped by which the owner could be ascertained, he should be allowed three months to claim his property; and by Richard it was added that if the owner perished, his sons and daughters, and in their default, his brothers and sisters, should have a claim in preference to the crown.

# CHAPTER II.

## THE EARLY PLANTAGENETS, 1154–1272.

## Development of the English Constitution.

## I. JOHN AND HENRY III.

### GUIDE ANALYSIS.

I. JOHN.
1. John a usurper.
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4. Quarrel with the pope.
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### I. JOHN. A. D. 1199–1216.

*Archbishops of Canterbury.*—Hubert Walter, 1193–1205; Stephen Langton, 1207–1216.

*Chief-Justices.*—Geoffrey Fitz-Peter, 1199–1213; Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester, 1214–1215; Hubert de Burgh, 1215–1216.

*Chancellors.*—Hubert Walter, 1199–1205; Walter Grey, 1205–1213; Peter des Roches, 1213–1214; Walter Grey, 1214; Richard de Marisco, 1214–1216.

WITHIN a few weeks after his brother's death, John was crowned at Westminster. He was a vile and weak ruler, under whom every feeling of every class of his subjects was outraged in turn. He began by confining Arthur, the rightful claimant of the crown, in a castle in Normandy, where it is supposed he was murdered. How he died no one ever knew; but history and tradition have laid the guilt of his death upon the conscience of King John. The story of Arthur's imprisonment and death, as told by Holinshed, is the commonly accepted account of his fate.

### JOHN AND ARTHUR.

It is said that King John caused his nephew Arthur to be brought before him at Falaise, and there went about to persuade him all that he could to forsake his friendship and alliance with the French king, and to lean and stick to him, his natural uncle. But Arthur, like one that wanted good counsel, and abounding too much in his own willful opinion, made a presumptuous answer, not only denying so to do, but also commanding King John to restore unto him the realms of England, with all those other lands and possessions which King Richard had in his hand at the hour of his death. For, sith the same appertaineth to him by right of inheritance, he assured him, except restitution were made the sooner, he should not long continue quiet. King John, being sore moved by such words thus uttered by his nephew, appointed (as before is said) that he should be strictly kept in prison, as first in Falaise, and after at Roan, within the new castle there.

Shortly after King John came over into England to be crowned again at Canterbury by the hands of Hubert, the archbishop there, on the 14th of April, and then went back again into Normandy, where, immediately upon his arrival, a rumor was spread through all France of the death of his nephew Arthur. True it is, that great suit was made to have Arthur set at liberty, as well by the French king as by William de Miches, a valiant baron of Poitou, and divers other noblemen of the Britains, who, when they could not prevail in their suit, they banded themselves together, and joining in confederacy with Robert, Earl of Alanson, the Viscount Beaumont, William de Fulgiers, and others, they began to levy sharp wars

against King John in divers places, insomuch (as it was thought) that so long as Arthur lived there would be no quiet in those parts; whereupon it was reported that King John, through persuasion of his counselors, appointed certain persons to go into Falaise, where Arthur was kept in prison under the charge of Hubert de Burgh, and there to put out the young gentleman's eyes.

But through such resistance as he made against one of the tormentors that came to execute the king's command, (for the others rather forsook their prince and country than they would consent to obey the king's authority therein,) and such lamentable words as he uttered, Hubert de Burgh did preserve him from that injury, not doubting but rather to have thanks than displeasure at the king's hands for delivering him of such infamy as would have redounded unto his highness if the young gentleman had been so cruelly dealt withal. For he considered that King John had resolved upon this point only in his heat and fury, (which moveth men to undertake many an inconvenient enterprise, unbeseeming the person of a common man, much more reproachful to a prince, all men in that mood being more foolish and furious, and prone to accomplish the perverse conceits of their ill-possessed hearts,) and that afterward, upon better advisement, he would both repent himself so to have commanded, and give them small thanks that should see it put into execution. Howbeit, to satisfy his mind for the time, and to stay the rage of the Britains, he caused it to be bruited abroad through the country that the king's commandment was fulfilled, and that Arthur also, through sorrow and grief, was departed out of this life. For the space of fifteen days this rumor incessantly ran through both the realms of England and France, and there was ringing for him through towns and villages as it had been for his funerals. It was also bruited that his body was buried in the monastery of St. Andrews of the Cisteaux order.

But when the Britains were nothing pacified, but rather kindled more vehemently to work all the mischief they could devise, in revenge of their sovereign's death, there was no remedy but to signify abroad again that Arthur was as yet living and in health. Now, when the king heard the truth of all this matter, he was nothing displeased for that his commandment was not executed, sith there were divers of his captains which uttered in plain words that he should not find knights to keep his castles if he dealt so cruelly with his nephew; for if it chanced any of them to be taken by the

king of France, or other their adversaries, they should be sure to taste of the like cup. But now touching the manner in very deed of the end of this Arthur, writers make sundry reports. Nevertheless, certain it is, that in the year next ensuing he was removed from Falaise unto the castle or tower of Roan, out of which there was not any that would confess that ever he saw him go alive. Some have written that as he essayed to have escaped out of prison, and proving to climb over the walls of the castle, he fell into the river of Seine, and so was drowned. Others write, that through very grief and languor he pined away and died of natural sickness. But some affirm that King John secretly caused him to be murdered and made away, so as it is not thoroughly agreed upon in what sort he finished his days; but verily King John was had in great suspicion, whether unworthily or not, the Lord knoweth.—HOLINSHED.

Philip of France did not hesitate to accuse John of the murder of Arthur; he summoned him to appear before his court of the peers of France to answer the charge, and on his non-appearance declared him to have forfeited all his French territories. Normandy, Maine, and Anjou passed into the hands of the French king, and only Aquitaine remained to John of his foreign possessions.

### QUARREL WITH THE POPE.

No sooner had John lost his French provinces than he began a quarrel with the pope about the appointment of an archbishop of Canterbury. This quarrel brought upon him the penalty of excommunication, and upon the realm, in punishment of the king, the severest form of the papal *interdict*. The effects of the interdict have been thus described:

The sentence of interdict was at that time the great instrument of vengeance and policy employed by the court of Rome; it was denounced against sovereigns for the slightest offenses, and made the guilt of one person involve the ruin of millions, even in

their spiritual and eternal welfare. The execution of it was calculated to strike the senses in the highest degree, and to operate with irresistible force on the superstitious minds of the people. The nation was of a sudden deprived of all exterior exercise of its religion; the altars were despoiled of their ornaments: the crosses, the relics, the images, the statues of the saints, were laid on the ground; and, as if the air itself were profaned, and might pollute them by its contact, the priests carefully covered them up, even from their own approach and veneration. The use of bells entirely ceased in all the churches. The bells themselves were removed from the steeples, and laid on the ground with the other sacred utensils. Mass was celebrated with shut doors, and none but the priests were admitted to that holy institution. The laity partook of no religious rite, except baptism to new-born infants and the communion to the dying. The dead were not interred in consecrated ground. They were thrown into ditches, or buried in common fields; and their obsequies were not attended with prayers or any hallowed ceremony. Marriages were celebrated in the church-yards; and that every action in life might bear the marks of this dreadful situation, the people were prohibited the use of meat, as in Lent or times of the highest penance; were debarred from all pleasures and entertainments, and were forbidden even to salute each other; or so much as to shave their beards, and give any decent attention to their person and apparel. Every circumstance carried symptoms of the deepest distress and of the most immediate apprehension of divine vengeance and indignation.—HUME.

As an ecclesiastical act, the features which most struck the minds of the country people were, that the daily sacrifice ceased, the doors of the churches were shut against them; that the dead were carried outside the town-gates, and buried in ditches or roadsides, without prayer or priests' offices. The images of apostles and saints were taken down or veiled; the frequent tinkle of the convent-bell no longer told the serf at the plow how the weary day was passing, or guided the traveler through the forest to a shelter for the night. Religion, wont to mix with and hallow each hour of the day, each action of life, was totally withdrawn. The state of the country resembled a raid of the Danes, or the days of old Saxon heathendom, before Augustine had set up the cross at Canterbury or holy men had penetrated the forest and the fen.—*Lives of the English Saints*, *No.* 10, *Stephen Langton.*

Closed are the gates of every sacred place,
Straight from the sun and tainted air's embrace,
All sacred things are covered; cheerful morn
Grows sad as night: no seemly garb is worn,
Nor is a face allowed to meet a face
With natural smile of greeting. Bells are dumb;
Ditches are graves—funereal rights denied;
And in the church-yard he must take his bride
Who dares be wedded.—WORDWORTH.

## THE SURRENDER OF THE CROWN TO THE POPE.

For a long time John showed himself impenetrable. He was quite content that his people should be deprived of the sacraments, that the clergy should be exiled, that the whole administration of the country should be paralyzed almost as it had been in the days of Stephen. Even the terrors of personal excommunication had been too lavishly used of late to make much impression, for Philip had thriven under the anger of Innocent, and John had at this very moment his nephew, the Emperor Otho, a partner in the tribulation. The threat of deposition might be a mere threat; it would be very strange if the pope should prefer the king of France to the king of England; and, if he did, John had a great army and fleet and treasure.

But if he thought that Innocent III. would be swayed either by the ordinary motives of popes or by the ordinary aims of policy, he was much mistaken. That great pope had set before himself a grand purpose of righteousness as it appeared to him; he was ready to set up the Hohenstaufen again and to depress the Welf, and to set Philip, the ally of the Hohenstaufen, and the husband of Ingeburga, above the other kings of the West, if he could gain his object. Innocent persisted. His legates openly warned John what the result would be if the sentence of deposition were to issue; and their words came true. John found or fancied himself involved in a web of conspiracy; warnings reached him from Wales and Scotland that his enemies were intriguing all around him, that he and his children would be put out of the throne and a new race of kings brought in. Then arose Peter of Wakefield and prophesied that on the next Ascension day John should be a king no more. Then came the news that Philip was equipping his fleet. So the man whom neither spiritual nor temporal weapons could bring to sub-

mission, moved by the prophecy of an impostor, lowered his flag and made the most abject submission that any king of the English has ever made.

On May 15, 1213, he met Pandulf, the pope's subdeacon and envoy, at Ewell, near Dover, and swore fealty to the pope; he consented at last to receive Langton, to restore the bishops and the monks of Canterbury, and indemnify them for their wrongs; he would do all that was asked of him, hold his kingdoms as fiefs of the Apostolic See, and pay tribute for them.

The barons and people looked on in amazed acquiescence; they did not, it would seem, all at once realize the shame of the transaction, or see that for them to be vassals of the pope's vassal was to sink a long step in the scale of freedom, whether political or ecclesiastical. They acquiesced, some gladly welcoming any solution of the difficulty, some, we are told, with grief and shame. And so that part of the drama of the reign ends.—STUBBS.

## II. JOHN AND THE GREAT CHARTER OF ENGLISH RIGHTS.

Then came the third and last great struggle of John's distracting reign, in which the barons wrested from him the "Great Charter" of English freedom. It is not necessary that we should follow with any comment the baronial war that opened the way for the vindication of national liberty as typified by this Charter. It will be sufficient to say that it was not till "John found himself with but seven knights at his back and before him a nation in arms" that he gave the promise to meet the barons and confirm their liberties by charter under the king's seal. The barons fixed the time and place—June 15 and Runnemede.

### RUNNEMEDE.

Runnemede, or Runingmede, as the Charter has it, was, according to Matthew of Westminster, a place where treaties concerning the peace of the kingdom had been often made. The name distinctly signifies a place of council. *Ruene-med* is an Anglo-Saxon compound, meaning the Council-Meadow. We can never forget that Council-Meadow, for it entered into our first visions of liberty:

"Fair Runnemede! oft hath my lingering eye
Paus'd on thy tufted green and cultur'd hill;
And there my busy soul would drink her fill
Of lofty dreams, which on thy bosom lie.
Dear plain! never my feet have pass'd thee by,
At sprightly morn, high noon, or evening still,
But thou hast fathom'd all my pliant will
To soul-ennobling thoughts of liberty.

"Thou dost not need a perishable stone
Of sculptur'd story—records ever young
Proclaim the gladdening triumph thou hast known—
The soil, the passing stream, hath still a tongue;
And every wind breathes out an eloquent tone
That Freedom's self might wake thy fields among."

These are commonplace rhymes—schoolboy verses; but we are not ashamed of having written them. Runnemede was our Marathon. Very beautiful is that narrow slip of meadow on the edge of the Thames, with gentle hills bounding it for a mile or so. It is a valley of fertility. Is this a fitting place to be the cradle of English freedom? Ought we not, to make our associations harmonious, to have something bolder and sterner than this quiet mead, and that still water, with its island cottage? Poetry tells us that "rocky ramparts" are

"The rough abodes of want and liberty."—GRAY.

But the liberty of England was nurtured in her prosperity. The Great Charter which says, "No freeman, or merchant, or villain shall be unreasonably fined for a small offense—the first shall not be deprived of his tenement, the second of his merchandise, the third of his implements of husbandry," exhibited a state far more advanced than that of the "want and liberty" of the poet, where the iron race of the mountain cliffs

"Insult the plenty of the vales below."

Runnemede *is* a fitting place for the cradle of English liberty. Denham, who from his Cooper's Hill looked down upon the Thames, wandering past this mead to become "the world's exchange," somewhat tamely speaks of the plain at his feet:

"Here was that Charter seal'd, wherein the crown
All marks of arbitrary power lays down;

Tyrant and slave, those names of hate and fear,
The happier style of king and subject bear;
Happy when both to the same center move,
When kings give liberty and subjects love."

Our liberty was not so won. It was wrested from kings, and not given by them; and the love we bestow upon those who are the central point of our liberty is the homage of reason to security. That security has made the Thames "the world's exchange;" that security has raised up the great city which lies like a mist below Cooper's Hill; that security has caused the towers of Windsor, which we see from the same hill, to rise up in new splendor, instead of crumbling into ruin like many a stronghold of feudal oppression. Our prosperity is the child of our free institutions; and the child has gone forward strengthening and succoring the parent. Yet the iron men who won this charter of liberties dreamed not of the day when a greater power than their own, the power of the merchants and the villains, would rise up to keep what they had sworn to win upon the altar of St. Edmundsbury. The Fitz-Walter, and De Roos, and De Clare, and De Percy, and De Mandeville, and De Vescy, and De Mowbray, and De Montacute, and De Beauchamp—these great progenitors of our English nobility—compelled the despot to put his seal to the Charter of Runnemede. But another order of men, whom they of the pointed shield and the mascled armor would have despised as slaves, have kept, and will keep, God willing, what they won on June 15 in the year of grace 1215. The thing has rooted into our English earth like the Ankerwyke Yew on the opposite bank of the Thames, which is still vigorous, though held to be older than the great day of Runnemede.—KNIGHT.

## MAGNA CHARTA.

The political history of John may be read in the most durable of antiquities—the records of the kingdom. And the people may read the most remarkable of these records whenever they please to look upon it. Magna Charta, the great charter of England, entire as at the hour it was written, is preserved, not for reference on doubtful questions of right, not to be proclaimed at market-crosses or to be read in churches, as in the time of Edward I., but for the gratification of a just curiosity and an honest national pride. The humblest in the land may look upon that document day by day, in

the British Museum, which, more than six hundred years ago, declared that "no freeman shall be arrested, or imprisoned, or dispossessed of his tenement, or outlawed, or exiled, or in any manner proceeded against, unless by the legal judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land." This is the foundation of the statute upon statute, and of what is as stringent as statute, the common law, through which for six hundred years we have been struggling to breathe the breath of freedom, and we have not struggled in vain. The Great Charter is in Latin, written in a beautiful hand. —KNIGHT.

Few people know what the Charter contains; that is, its exact expressions; but this we know, that by it a bound was set to undefined and extravagant claims—that justice was insured to every subject of the crown—a fair trial and personal liberty. This Charter, wrung from his fears by the barons at Runnemede, has been confirmed in all succeeding generations by the spirit and independence of the nation. It has been at intervals re-introduced into Parliament, and renewed in endless proclamations. We have no need of the written words now. It is not a thing like Homer's "Iliad," that we are taught at school, nor like a ballad that we know by heart, and that stirs us like a trumpet when we repeat the words. It is something we are born to, as to the enjoyment of this English air; we feel it all around, but we neither analyze its contents nor trace its operations upon our lungs and heart; we only know that it is indispensable to our existence, and that its effects are health and strength and happiness. Honor, then, to the brave old barons of Runnemede, who tied the insolent hands that were about to add fresh burdens to his oppressed and undefended people. They tell us that in extorting Magna Charta, the barons only attended to their own interests. Lucky for us, if the case be so, that then, as now, the interests of a true nobility and faithful commons were the same; lucky that the stroke that humbles the loom and the plow recoils upon the coronet and the star.—WHITE.

Magna Charta was a treaty of peace between the king and his people, and so is a complete national act. It is the first act of the kind, for it differs from the charters issued by Henry I., Stephen, and Henry II., not only in its greater fullness and perspicuity, but by having a distinct machinery provided to carry it out. Twenty-five barons were nominated to compel the king to fulfill his part. It was not, as has been sometimes said, a selfish attempt on the

part of the barons and bishops to secure their own privileges; it provided that the commons of the realm should have the benefit of every advantage which the two elder estates had won for themselves, and it bound the barons to treat their own dependents as it bound the king to treat the barons. Of its sixty-three articles, some provided securities for personal freedom; no man was to be taken, imprisoned, or damaged in person or estate, but by the judgment of his peers and by the law of the land. Others fixed the rate of payments due by the vassal to his lord. Others presented rules for national taxation, and for the organization of a national council, without the consent of which the king could not tax. Others decreed the banishment of the alien servants of John. Although it is not the foundation of English liberty, it is the first, the clearest, the most united, and historically the most important, of all the great enunciations of it; and it was a revelation of the possibility of freedom to the mediæval world. The maintenance of the charter becomes from henceforth the watchword of English freedom.—STUBBS.

### DEATH AND CHARACTER OF KING JOHN.

With the greatest bitterness of spirit John cursed all his barons instead of bidding them farewell; and in this manner, poor and deprived of all his treasures, and not retaining the smallest portion of land in peace, so that he was truly called Lackland, he most miserably departed from this life on the night following the next day after the day of Saint Luke the Evangelist. And because this John made himself detestable to all persons . . . he scarcely deserved to be mourned by the lamentations of any one.—MATTHEW OF WESTMINSTER.

There is no need to attempt an elaborate analysis of his character. History has set upon it a darker and deeper mark than she has on any other king. He was in every way the worst of the whole list: the most vicious, the most profane, the most tyrannical, the most false, the most short-sighted, the most unscrupulous.—STUBBS.

It is hard to give the true character of this king's condition. For we only behold him through such light as the friars, his foes, show him in; who so hold the candle that, with the shadow thereof, they darken his virtues and present only his vices. Yea, and as if they had also poisoned his memory, they cause his faults to

swell to a prodigious greatness, making him with their pens more black in conditions than the Morocco king (whose aid he requested) could be in complexion; a murderer of his nephew Arthur; a defiler of the wives and daughters of his nobles; sacrilegious in the Church; profane in his discourse; willful in his private resolutions; various in his public promises; false in his faith to man, and wavering in his religion to God. . .. . Perchance he had been esteemed more pious if more prosperous, it being an usual (though uncharitable) error to account mischances to be misdeeds. — FULLER.

Perhaps the best summary of his life is the simple record of the great facts of his reign: that he lost Normandy, that he became the pope's vassal, and that he died fighting against Magna Charta. Never, probably, was there an English king of whom the poet might have said with greater truth, that "he wearied God."— PEARSON.

## III. HENRY III. A. D. 1216–1272.

*Archbishops of Canterbury.*—Stephen Langton, 1216–1228; Richard le Grand, 1229–1231; Edmund Rich, 1234–1240; Boniface of Savoy, 1245–1270.

*Chief-Justices.*—Hubert de Burgh, 1216–1232; Stephen Segrave, 1232–1234; Hugh Bigot, 1258–1260; Hugh le Despencer, 1260; Philip Basset, 1261.

*Chancellors.*—Richard de Marisco, 1216–1226; Ralph Neville, 1226–1244; Walter de Merton, 1261; Nicolas de Ely, 1263; Thomas Cantilupe, 1265; Walter Gifford, 1265; Godfrey Gifford, 1267; Richard Middleton, 1269–1272.

On the death of King John, his son Henry, a boy nine years old, was crowned king of England, and William Marshall, the Earl of Pembroke, was appointed "governor of the king and kingdom." The earl lived long enough to finish the civil war which the oppression of King John had excited. After his death the guardianship of the young king was given into the hands of Peter des Roches, and Hubert de Burgh was appointed protector of the kingdom. These two men soon became rivals, and the

troubles that grew out of this rivalry furnish nearly all the history of the years of Henry's minority.

The history of the thirty-one years which form the period of Henry's personal administration presents scene after scene of misgovernment and trouble.

The following passages from Professor Stubbs' sketch of Henry's reign give a general view of the king's shortcomings and the national complaints:

Henry's first act was an ill-omened one. In January, 1227, in a council at Oxford, he declared himself of full age to govern, emancipated himself from the guardianship of Peter des Roches, but insisted that all charters and other grants sealed during his minority should be regarded as invalid until a confirmation of them had been purchased at a fixed rate. This declaration, founded, it would seem, on a resolution of the council agreed on in 1218, that no grants involving perpetuity should be sealed until he came of age, was heard with great alarm. The alarm spread further when it was known that the forest boundaries, which had been settled by perambulation in 1225, were to be rearranged under royal direction. If the forest liberties were to be tampered with, the Great Charter itself would be in peril. But either the alarm was unfounded or the excitement that followed insured its own remedy. Large sums were raised by confirming private charters; but, on a representation made by a body of the earls, the forest administration was let alone and the Great Charter was not threatened. The whole project was seen to be a mere expedient for raising money. Whether money were given or refused, the king went on asking for more; whether he met the national complaints with promise or with insult, the evils remained alike unredressed. No permanent ministers were appointed; the king nominated a clerk or a judge from time to time to dispatch formal business, and every important transaction for which he himself was not personally competent was left to be settled at haphazard. Some good results followed; the country learned that the king was really dependent on the nation, although it failed to impress that lesson upon Henry himself.

No great design is attempted during these years; the barons see no return for the great costs to which the king puts them. The king of France goes on Crusade, but Henry only raises money on

the pretext, and spends or wastes it on other purposes. The pope drains the kingdom. There are murmurs, but no blows, no conspiracies, no leader. Simon de Montfort is employed in Gascony; Earl Richard minds his own business. The kingdom is again handed over to the Poictevins, yet no one has position or energy to take the lead. So matters drag on. Through a shifty, shuffling, purposeless public policy on the king's part, a sullen determination to reign as despotically as his father had done constantly makes itself apparent. The papal influence, too, by which his foreign policy was guided, was gradually bringing him up to a point at which the national spirit would no longer endure him. We cannot fail to perceive further that Henry's determination to act as his own minister could have but one result—that, when the time for account came, the account would be demanded of him himself personally; he would have no agents behind whom he could screen himself, or whom he could sacrifice to justify himself. Henry's personal character, his pliancy and want of principle, may perhaps have helped to put off the day of account, so long delayed, and it may have been his own misfortune that he lived so long to try the patience of the people.

### FORMATION OF A NATIONAL PARTY UNDER SIMON DE MONTFORT.

At last, weary of the personal government of the king, all the oppressed and offended joined in resistance to him. The barons became the champions of the popular cause, and, under the leadership of Earl Simon of Leicester, Simon de Montfort, they assembled at a Parliament—the Mad Parliament the old historians called it—determined upon reform. Many days were spent in angry debate on the many existing causes of discontent. The result was that certain articles of reform were drawn up, called the Provisions of Oxford, which the king was forced to sign. The nation then divided into two parties: one gathered round the king, the other round De Montfort, the real national leader of England.

That there were men in England who neither could nor would endure such government was to be expected; but one's admiration is especially warmed to find there were English women who could tell the king plain truths in plain words. The young widowed Countess of Arundel, having failed to obtain what she alleged to be hers in equity, thus addressed him before his court: "Oh, my lord king, why do you turn away from justice? We cannot now obtain that which is right in your court. You are placed as a mean between God and us, but you neither govern us nor yourself, neither dread you to vex the Church diversely, as is not only felt in present, but hath been heretofore. Moreover, you doubt not manifoldly to afflict the nobles of the kingdom." Henry listened with a scornful and angry look, and then cried out in a loud voice, "O, my lady countess, what? have the lords of England, because you have a tongue at will, made a charter, and hired you to be their orator and advocate?" But the lady had as much wit and presence of mind as courage, and answered, "Not so, my lord; for they have made to me no charter. But that charter which your father made, and yourself confirmed, swearing to keep the same inviolably and constantly, and often extorting money upon the promise that the liberties therein contained should be faithfully observed, you have not kept, but, without regard to conscience or honor, broken. Therefore are you found to be a manifest violator of your faith and oath. For where are the liberties of England, so often fairly engrossed in writing? so often granted? so often bought? I, therefore, though a woman, and all the natural loyal people of the land, appeal against you to the tribunal of the fearful Judge," etc. The king was overawed, but of course remained unchanged; and the lady, as Matthew Paris tells us, lost her charges, hopes, and travail.

When women thus speak, men must begin to act. A confederacy was soon formed, and the barons "determined to come strong to Oxford at St. Barnabas day." According to their agreement they appeared in an imposing body before the king, "exquisitely armed and appointed, that so the king and his aliens should be enforced, if they would not willingly assent." Of course, their demand was the old demand—the charter; but there was a new and very important addendum, that the country should be ruled, according to its provisions, by twenty-four men, to be then and there chosen by the assembly. The leader of the confederated barons was the

king's brother-in-law, Simon de Montfort, a Frenchman by the father's side, but in every other respect one of the truest of Englishmen. Before events had shown Henry the lofty and commanding spirit that his oppressions had raised, he had a kind of prescience of the fact, which is somewhat remarkable. Being one day, in the month of June, in his barge on the Thames, there came on so heavy a storm of rain, thunder, and lightning, that Henry impatiently caused himself to be set down at the nearest mansion, which happened to be Durham House, where the Earl of Leicester then was. De Montfort came forth to meet him, and seeing the king's alarm, observed, "Sir, why are you afraid? the tempest is now past." Henry, looking at the speaker with a troubled and lowering aspect, replied, "I fear thunder and lightning above measure; but, by the head of God, I do more fear thee than all the thunder and lightning of the world." The quiet dignity of the earl's reply was admirable: "My liege, it is injurious and incredible that you should stand in fear of me, who have always been loyal both to you and your realm, whereas you ought to fear your enemies, such as destroy the realm and abuse you with bad counsels." The war, toward which all things had been long tending, at last broke out. In 1264 there met at Lewes two great armies; the one headed by the king and his son, Prince Edward, who had till recently supported the barons, the other by De Montfort, whose soldiers were directed to wear white crosses on their breasts and backs, to show they fought for justice. The result was a complete triumph for the popular party; the king was taken prisoner in the battle, and the prince yielded himself also to captivity the day after, as a hostage of peace. De Montfort's power was now supreme over England, and, though there appears not the smallest proof that he ill-used it, some among his brother nobles grew jealous, especially the Earl of Gloucester.—From *Old England.*

### LAST YEARS AND DEATH OF DE MONTFORT.

Between the battle of Lewes and another, which resulted in the death of Leicester,* that celebrated step was taken which added to the Council of Lords and Prelates, already existing, that other kind of members who represented the middle classes, and laid the foundation of what is the most powerful body in our great kingdom—

* Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester.

the House of Commons. Leicester used the name of the captive king in issuing his writs, and, besides calling two knights from every county to represent what we call "the country gentlemen," called also "two citizens from every city and two burgesses from every borough," in order that the professional men, merchants, shop-keepers, and tradespeople generally, should also have spokesmen in the great council of the nation. At first these mercantile and professional members, overawed by the novelty of their position, gave their votes silently, not daring to speak in presence of men accustomed to dictate to kings and govern the destinies of a great land. But they soon learned to speak boldly out.

Prince Edward escaped from prison in the spring, and gathered an army for war. Leicester, whose son was in Sussex, lay at Hereford, west of the Severn, and, in spite of Edward's efforts to keep him there by breaking bridges and burning boats, managed to cross to Worcester, where he waited for his son. But Edward came suddenly by night on this young warrior near Kenilworth, and after scattering his force, obliged him to seek shelter in the great castle there. The Earl moved to a place on the Avon called Evesham, and with great gladness saw his own banners coming over the hills from Kenilworth. These, however, turned out to be the captured standards of his son. And when he looked to other points of the compass he saw glittering files of spears advancing in converging lines toward the position he held. Bitterly, as he saw this sight, did he cry, "It was I who taught them the art of war."

But bitter words were of little use at such a crisis. Having put his men in array of battle, he knelt down to say a short prayer, and then took the sacrament, as pious knights always did before going into battle. The fortunes of the day went against him from the first; but he resolved to sell his life dearly. His last stand was made on the top of a hill, where he gathered in a solid circle round him some of his bravest men. When his horse was killed he fought on foot; but the circle at length yielded to the pressure of charges fron every side, and brave old Leicester, who, as benefactor of the English people, was second to none, fell on his last field. His head and limbs were brutally chopped off and sent as a present to the wife of his greatest foe.—COLLIER.

The victory of Evesham liberated Henry and re-established the royal government, but "the interest of the reign,

and indeed its importance, ends here. Simon is the hero of the latter part of it, and the death of Simon closes it, although the king reigns for seven years longer."

### CHARACTER OF HENRY III.

All the months of the year may, in a manner, be carved out of an April day—hot, cold, dry, moist, fair, foul weather, being oft presented therein. Such was the character of King Henry III.'s life; certain only in uncertainty; in wealth, in want; conquered, conqueror.—THOMAS FULLER.

Henry's character hardly needs the long commentary of his reign to be understood. The small thick stature was all he had in common with his grandfather; the drooping eyelid, with his son. Never man was more strangely placed between the first Plantagenets and Edward I. than the king who as a private gentleman would have lived without infamy and without praise, and whose mild well-meaning and religiousness almost balanced his perjuries, his profusion, and his injustice—the results of weakness, not of positive vice—in the eyes of contemporaries.—PEARSON.

Gentle and credulous, warm in his attachments and forgiving to his enemies, without vices, but also without energy, Henry was a good man and a weak monarch. In a more peaceful age, when the empire of the laws had been strengthened by obedience, he might have filled the throne with decency, perhaps with honor; but his lot cast him into one of the most turbulent periods of our history, without talents to command respect, or the authority to enforce submission. Yet his incapacity was productive rather of inconvenience to himself than of misery to his subjects. Under his weak but pacific sway the nation grew more rapidly than it had done under any of his military progenitors. Out of the fifty-six years through which he extended his reign, but a very small portion was marked by the calamities of war. The tenants of the crown were seldom dragged by him into foreign countries, or impoverished by scutages for the support of mercenary armies; the proprietors, deprived of two sources of wealth—the plunder of an enemy and the ransom of captives—turned their attention to the improvement of their estates; salutary enactments invigorated the spirit of commerce; and there scarcely existed a port, from the coast of Norway to the shores of Italy, that was not annually visited by English merchants. This

statement may surprise those who have listened only to the remonstrances of the factious barons, or the complaints of discontented historians; but the fact is that of all the kings since the conquest Henry received the least money from the tenants of the crown.—LINGARD.

His life, good or evil, had no gloss or glitter upon it; it was mean in the midst of its magnificence; it was wanting in the one element that leads men to respect, even where they fear and blame, the character of reality or "veracity to a man's self." There was no purpose, as there was no faith, in it.—STUBBS.

## CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES.

### PARLIAMENT AT OXFORD.

In the council held at Oxford, twenty-four barons were appointed to inquire into the grievances of the nation and suggest means of redress. On the recommendation of this committee the following regulations, historically known as the Constitution of the Provisions of Oxford, were approved:

1. That four knights should be chosen by the freeholders of each county to lay before Parliament all their grievances.
2. That sheriffs of counties should be chosen annually by the freeholders.
3. That all public accounts should be given annually.
4. That no heirs should be committed to the wardship of foreigners; and that no castles should be intrusted to their custody.
5. That Parliament should meet three times a year, in the beginning of the months of February, June, and October.

### THIS IS THE OATH OF THE TWENTY-FOUR.

Each swore on the holy Gospels that he, to the honor of God, and to his faith to the king, and to the profit of the realm, will ordain and treat with the aforesaid sworn persons * upon the reformation and amendment of the state of the realm. And that he will not

* De Montfort and his party, who had sworn to the "Provisions" made by the twenty-four.

fail for gift, nor for promise, for love nor for hate, nor for fear of any one, nor for gain, nor for loss, loyally to do according to the tenor of the letter which the king and his son have given for this.

THE PARLIAMENT OF SIMON DE MONTFORT.

This is the famous Parliament, as it is called, of Simon de Montfort, the first assembly of the sort to which representatives of the borough towns were called; and thus, to some extent, forms a landmark in English history. It was not made a precedent, and in fact it is not till thirty years after that the representatives of the towns begin regularly to sit in Parliament; but it is nevertheless a very notable date. Nor was the assembly itself what would be called a full and free parliament, only those persons being summoned who were favorable to the new *regime;* but five earls and eighteen barons, and an overwhelming number of the lower clergy, knights, and burghers, who were, of course, supporters of Earl Simon. It met on January 20, 1265, and did not effect much.—STUBBS.

## IV. THE FRIARS.

We must not leave Henry's reign without glancing briefly at the history of the friars, whose faithful work among the most wretched outcasts of society had called into life a new spirit of religious energy. The two chief orders of friars were the Dominican and Franciscan. The Dominicans, in the black robe which gave them their name of Black Friars, were "practiced in a profound study of the Scriptures, armed with knowledge, and trained to skill in its use, that they might detect heresy in its beginnings, and triumph over it when at its strongest." The Franciscans, called Gray Friars, from the color of their habit, represented another form of religious effort. They "put aside the pride of knowledge, left book-learning to the Dominicans, called themselves the Lesser Friars, Fratres Minores, Minorites, and trusted to humility of love."

Upon the higher ground, as may be seen in many towns in England at the present day, stood the Guildhall and the Ward of the Aldermen, distinguished by houses partially built of stone pilfered from the old Roman monuments, forming a striking contrast to the outer circle and the suburbs, where, down to the water's edge and straggling beyond it, in an uncertain and precarious tenure, rose wooden sheds, rudely plastered or white-washed, on the edge of the town-ditch, sheltering the last new settlers that had flocked into the town for occupation or protection; a mixed race, of whom little inquiry was made; tolerated, not acknowledged; of all blood, all climates, and all religions; permitted to live or die, as it pleased God or themselves, provided only that they yielded due obedience to the proper civic authorities. Here the leprosy and the plague were certain to enter first; here infection did its worst. In the higher city there might be parish churches and schools; a skillful leech * to look after the welfare, bodily and spiritual, of the inhabitants. In defect of these, the different guilds established in the city proper provided in some measure for the instruction and comfort of the master and his apprentices. The city ponds and rivulets yielded fresh water to those who were willing to fetch it; the chaplain of the guild, its church or chapel, provided for the common worship and spiritual welfare of its members; the common purse of the guild furnished relief against sudden misfortune, and paid for the funeral obsequies and masses of the defunct brother. But for the unguilded population, who resided in the suburbs, and increased daily and rapidly in the unsettled condition of the country, or as the oppression or harshness or stern justice of the feudal baron made the town a more safe and desirable abiding-place than the country—for these there were no such advantages. Imagination can only conceive their condition; history is silent.

Now, it was to this class of the population, in the first instance, that the attention of the Franciscan was directed; in these wretched localities his convent and order were seated. I have not been able to examine the primitive position of all their religious houses in England; but a glance at the more important will show the general correctness of this statement. In London, York, Warwick, Oxford, Bristol, Lynn, and elsewhere, their convents stood in the suburbs and abutted on the city walls. They made choice of the low,

* Physician.

swampy, and undrained spots in the large towns, among the poorest and most neglected quarters. Unlike the magnificent monasteries and abbeys, which excite admiration to this day, their buildings, to the very last, retained their primitive squat, low, and meager proportions. Their first house, at their settlement in London, stood in the neighborhood of Cornhill, where they built cells, stuffing the party-walls with dried grass. Near the shambles in Newgate, and close upon the city gate of that name, on a spot appropriately called Stinking Lane, rose the chief house of the order in England. In Oxford the parish of St. Ebbe's, in Cambridge the decayed town jail, in Norwich the water side, running close to the walls of the town, are the special and chosen spots of the Franciscan missionary.

In all instances the poverty of their buildings corresponded with those of the surrounding district; their living and lodging are no better than the poorest among whom they settle. At Cambridge their chapel was erected by a single carpenter in one day. At Shrewsbury, where, owing to the liberality of the townsmen, the dormitory walls had been built of stone, the minister of the order had them removed and replaced with mud. Decorations and ornaments of all kinds were zealously excluded. At Gloucester a friar was deprived of his hood for painting his pulpit, and the warden of the same place suffered similar punishment for tolerating pictures. Their meals corresponded with the poverty of their buildings. Mendicancy* might encourage idleness, but it also secured effectually the mean and meager diet of the friars. It kept them on a par with the masses among whom their founder intended them to labor. They could not sell their offerings; they were not permitted to receive more than their actual necessities required; meal, salt, figs, and apples; wood for firing; stale beer or milk. Whatever the weather, however rough the way, they threaded the muddy streets and unpaved roads barefooted and bareheaded, leaving the prints of their bleeding feet upon the ground, in gowns of the coarsest cloth, which an economical vestryman of this nineteenth century would be ashamed to offer to the most refractory pauper in a parish work-house.—BREWER.

* The friars subsisted by begging for alms.

### ROGER BACON.

The famous Franciscan friar, Roger Bacon, condemned the ignorance of his order and dwelt emphatically upon the "need of the exact knowledge by Churchmen." For himself he went the round of all the knowledge of his day, and applied the learning which he acquired to the discovery of useful knowledge.

I have glanced at these two types of men, as they might have been seen at this distant time, because their search, though they did not find the thing they sought, was not entirely in vain. In truth, they found out for us in these midnight porings many things about minerals, gases, liquids, and the stars, which prepared the way for our great chemists and astronomers of modern times. And there were men among them who thought of inventions that did not ripen for centuries after their time. Such a one was Roger Bacon, a Franciscan friar, whose story I am now about to tell in a few words.

This man, who has been called the father of our experimental philosophy, was a native of Somersetshire, and a student of Oxford and Paris. In the former place, having put on the gray frock of the Franciscan monks, he gave himself up to a life of experiments and research. He sought the talismans which infatuated the alchemist, and he dealt, too, in the marvels of astrology. But he saw much truth while wasting his hours in the vain pursuit of forbidden knowledge. The two things for which his name in science is especially famous, were his knowledge of an explosive substance like gunpowder, and his idea of an instrument which would do what our modern telescope does for us. He tells us that he could so prepare the thing called saltpeter, as to make a small portion of it—as much as would fill a little parchment bag the size of one's thumb—explode with a noise like thunder and a flash like lightning. And he tells us, too, that he believed it possible to shape and arrange transparent substances like glass and crystal, so that the smallest letters might, by looking through them, be read at a wonderful distance, and that even grains of sand might be counted in the same way; adding that he could make a boy look like a giant, and a man like a mountain. He had got the idea of

the microscope—an earlier invention—from books or teachers in his youth; but he here expands his knowledge of the simple magnifying-glass into a hint of that wonderful instrument by which our sight can penetrate millions of miles beyond the sun, and can actually discern the mountains and valleys in the moon.

Friar Bacon, as a matter of course, because he knew more than most men of his day, was supposed to have sold his soul to Satan; and, taking advantage of this wretched piece of superstition, his enemies got him cast into prison at the age of sixty-four. But they only gave him a better opportunity for thought and study; and within walls, which would have been very terrible to a man used to the bustle and glitter of a court life, this great father of science continued for ten years quietly to make his experiments and write his books. When he was released from his cell in prison, he went back calmly to his rooms at Oxford, and there he died.—COLLIER.

# CHAPTER III.

## EDWARD I. AND EDWARD II, 1272–1327.

## Completion of the Constitution.

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IV. EDWARD II.—SCOTLAND FREE.
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### EDWARD I. AND PARLIAMENT, A. D. 1272–1307.

THE reign of Edward I. was a prosperous and happy one for England. He loved his people, and set before him as his first object the work of wise government and the

making of wise laws for their good and happiness. He summoned Parliaments such as Earl Simon had summoned, consisting of the peers or high nobles and the bishops, the county members, and the town members. The chief object of these Parliaments was to make good laws for the protection and prosperity of the nation. It has been said that "there was more improvement made in the English laws during the *first* thirteen years of the reign of Edward I. than in all ages since his time."* So prudent were the laws enacted under his care, that he has been called the English Justinian. It is hoped that from the following selections may be gathered the great constitutional importance of the work of Edward I. A few of the details are of interest to the student of social life and manners.

### EDWARD'S PARLIAMENTS.

Things were very different in Edward's time from what they are now. We all know how fond people are of being members of Parliament now; how they do and say all they can to induce the electors to choose them, and look upon it as the greatest honor, as indeed it is. But in those days it was considered a great burden and a great trouble. It was very difficult to get the members to come to Parliament; the towns did not like the trouble and expense of sending representatives, (who were paid in those days,) and it was quite difficult to assemble them together. People did not as yet know the good that would come of it. It is generally a few, or perhaps only one wise man, who first sees what is the right thing to do as the world slowly changes; he is probably called a fool for it, or mad, for the common run of people cannot see what he sees. Perhaps, and indeed most likely, he gets killed, as Simon was, or despised and half-starved, as Roger Bacon was. But by and by his ideas tell; a few more people begin to understand them; then more and more; at last his wise thought is believed by every body—it becomes a sort of commonplace; and in the end the truth prevails, and must prevail, in the world which God made.

* Judge Hale, as quoted by Hallam.

Another set of people who might have come to Parliament would not come. Those were the clergy. Just as there were bishops in the Upper House, there might have been clergymen in the Lower. But they would not come. And now all a clergyman can do in governing his country is just what other men can do; he can vote for members of Parliament, but he cannot be one himself. This is probably a very good thing. For, highly as the clergy are to be respected in their own sphere, in teaching and studying, in caring for the poor and visiting the sick, it has been found in all history that they are not good at governing. We have already seen enough of the pope's government, and the harm it did; but when Protestant and Puritan clergy have got into power (as they did once in Scotland) it has not answered well either for themselves or the country.—M. J. GUEST.

## EDWARD'S FIRST FULL PARLIAMENT.

In 1283 Edward brought together at Acton Burnel a body called in history a Parliament; but, though representatives of the shires and of twenty-one towns sat in it, this assembly has no right to the name of Parliament; for not only were the clergy of every rank absent from it, but also the royal summons was sent direct to the towns, and not through the sheriff, which would have been the constitutional method. Other assemblies followed; but to each was wanting something that a lawful Parliament could not be without.

At last, in 1295, King Edward took the final step. He had in that year a French war and a Welsh rebellion on his hands; and had, moreover, grave cause to be uneasy about Scotland. To win the hearty good-will of his own subjects was an important point; and, accordingly, toward the end of 1295, he gathered at Westminster an assembly that was in every sense a national Parliament. The writs calling it together were issued in the way that the constitution directed. The three estates were present; even the lower clergy were represented. On its coming together it straightway fulfilled the sole duty of a Parliament in those days—voted the king a supply. Edward seems to have been fully aware of the importance of the step he was taking. In the writ addressed to the archbishop he uses language which shows his sense that Parliament was to become a necessary part of the State in England. "It

is a most just law," he says, "that what concerns all should be approved of by all, and that common dangers should be met by measures provided in common." The lower clergy ceased to sit in Parliament after a time; but, with this exception, since 1295 every national council worthy to be called a Parliament has been made up of the same parts as that of 1295.—ROWLEY.

## SOME OF THE STATUTES PASSED AT EDWARD'S PARLIAMENT.

Without entering upon such provisions of the statute passed at Edward's first Parliament as are of a technical nature, we may mention a few matters which are illustrative of the condition of society. Religious houses were oppressed by barons and great men demanding hospitality, at a time when there were no public hostelries. The statute provides that none should so lodge and feed unless invited, but "that the grace of hospitality should not be withdrawn from such as need." On the subject of wrecks of the sea, it was enacted that where a man, a dog, or a cat escape quick out of the ship, that such ship, nor barge, nor any thing within them, should be adjudged wreck. The statute asserted freedom of election against the interference of any man by arms or menace. It threatened with punishment the devisors of slanderous news—the first libel law. It rendered juries giving false verdicts liable to "attaint," under which suspicion the king granted a new trial; and it is said that "certain people of this realm doubt very little to make a false oath." Lastly, the statute provided that particular assizes should be held during the great seasons of religious festival; "forasmuch as it is a great charity to do right unto all men at all times."

We may mention one or two other statutes of this period before we resume the course of our narrative. The statute for the office of the coroner provides that he should go to the places where any be slain, or suddenly dead, or wounded, or where houses are broken, or where treasure is said to be found, and there make inquiry upon the oath of four of the next towns, or five or six. The Statute of Merchants (1283) recites that "merchants which heretofore have lent their goods to divers persons be greatly impoverished, because there is no speedy law provided for them to have recovery of their debts at the day of payment assigned." Lord Chief-Justice Campbell, speaking of this law, (called the Statute of Acton Burnel,) says,

that "the grievance which is peculiar to England, of being obliged to bring an action and have a debt established by the judgment of a court of the law before enforcing payment of it, when there is not the slightest doubt of the validity of the instrument by which it is constituted, has always been a reproach to the administration of justice in this country." * The Statute of Acton Burnel provided that where a debt had been acknowledged before a proper officer, and a day of payment fixed, execution might follow on default of payment. It is only within the last year that the principle has been applied to bills of exchange. The Statute of Winchester (1285) recites that robberies, murders, and burning of houses "be more often used than they have been heretofore," and therefore makes the hundred answerable for robberies. But it attempts something for prevention. In great towns, being walled, the gates are to be closed from sun-setting to sun-rising, and there shall be watch all night. Highways leading from one market-town to another are to be enlarged, so that, within two hundred feet of each side of the road there should be no bushes, woods, or dykes, with the exception of great trees; and if the lord would not abate the dyke, underwood, or bushes, he is to be answerable for any felony committed. It is also provided that "every man have in his house harness, for to keep the peace after the antient assize:" and the nature of the arms to be kept—whether hauberk, sword, knife, or bow and arrows—is regulated according to the property, in land or goods, of the owner of the house. In the statutes for the city of London (also 1285) "it is enjoined that none be hardy to be found going or wandering about the streets of the city after curfew bell tolled at St. Martin's-le-Grand, with sword, or buckler, or other arms for doing mischief," and that "none do keep a tavern open for wine or ale after the tolling of the aforesaid curfew." In 1279 a law, called the Statute of Mortmain, was passed. In Magna Charta there was a provision against a person giving his land to a religious house, so as to take it back and hold it of the house. The statute (7 Edward I.) prescribed that all lands given in mortmain—that is, into the "dead hand" of the Church—without the king's special license were to be forfeited. Matthew of Westminster notices this enactment in a quaint fashion: "The king and prelates and nobles of England agreed together and enacted that the members of the religious orders should not be enriched by any

* "Lives of the Lord Chancellors."

increase of landed estates, saying that it was to the detriment of the kingdom and of military service that the military fees and other possessions had fallen into the dead hands of the religious orders; not understanding, perchance, that the army of the Amalekites was overthrown rather by the prayers of Moses than by the valor in combat of the children of Israel." The religious bodies to which lands were conveyed were corporations; and having perpetual succession, the former lords of the lands lost the benefit of their tenants' services, or the fines upon inheritance when the property passed into the dead hand; "for that a dead hand," in the words of Coke, "yieldeth no service." The existing laws of mortmain rest upon another principle.—Abridged from KNIGHT'S *History of England.*

## THE TAXES.

In 1297 the one thing still wanting to give the finishing touch to the building up of Parliament—a solemn acknowledgment by the king that it alone had power to tax the nation—was gained. The great Scottish war had broken out; and Edward, in his extreme need of money, acted rather tyrannically. He demanded a large grant from the clergy, and when they would not give it, withdrew from them the protection of the law. He seized the wool in the hands of the merchants—though only as a loan—and did many other things which set at naught the rights of the people. The barons resisted; the Earls of Norfolk and Hereford refused either to lead an army to Gascony—which, as marshal and constable, Edward thought they were bound to do—or to go with the king to Flanders. When Edward went to Flanders, they took advantage of his absence to force on the government at home, and finally on Edward also, a confirmation of the charters, (the Great Charter and the Charter of the Forest.) But there were added seven new clauses, in which the king promised, among other things, to take from his people no "aids, tasks, or prises, but by the common assent of the realm . . . saving the ancient aids and prises due and accustomed." This was a full grant to Parliament of what has been called the power of the purse, which for many years simply meant that without a vote of Parliament the crown had no lawful means of adding to its fixed income raised from feudal and other sources.—ROWLEY.

Professor Stubbs closes his sketch of the constitutional history of England in these words:

"We stop with Edward I. because the machinery is now completed, the people are at full growth. The system is raw and untrained and awkward, but it is complete. The attaining of this point is to be attributed to the defining genius, the political wisdom, and the honesty of Edward I., building on the immemorial foundations of national custom; fitting together all that Henry I. planned, Henry II. organized, and the heroes of the thirteenth century inspired with fresh life."

## II. Edward I. and Wales.

While ruling justly and nobly within his realm, Edward's aim without it was to join together all the parts of Britain into a single kingdom. In the early years of his reign he took in hand the conquest of Wales. We have heard very little about the Welsh since they were driven away into the western part of the island. They were, it will be remembered, the remains of the old Britons who had escaped the Roman and Saxon invasions. They were still living according to their own ancient and simple customs. A little before the time of Edward I., Giraldus Cambrensis, an educated Welshman, wrote a very interesting account of Wales. The following extract is, in brief, the substance of his description of the customs and manners of his own countrymen. It will help us to understand Edward's way of dealing with Wales if we know what kind of people the Welsh were.

### CUSTOMS AND MANNERS OF THE WELSH.

At this time the Welsh were still considered a very religious people, religious after the fashion of that time. The Archdeacon Gerald tells us "they show a greater respect than other nations to churches and ecclesiastical persons, to the relics of saints, bells, holy books, and the cross, which they devoutly revere." They had a very odd way of showing honor to the Trinity, which was, that

"they sit down by three to a dish in honor of the Trinity." Even up to this time it was not usual for people to have plates to themselves, but two, three, or four people would go shares in one dish. They had another religious custom at meals which was rather more reasonable. "They give the first piece broken off from every loaf of bread to the poor." But they did not use a great deal of bread. They do not seem to have made much progress in civilization all this time, and, like most half-civilized people, they lived more on milk, cheese, butter, and meat, than on bread, because they knew and cared very little about agriculture, nor was their country well suited to it.

They cared nothing about trade or manufacture either. For ships they had little wicker boats covered with skins, just as the old Britons had. Such boats are still used on the Welsh rivers for fishing. They lived in little houses made of boughs of trees twisted together and which would last about a year. They had no gardens nor orchards, but would gladly eat the fruit of both when given to them.

Besides religion, the one thing they cared most for was fighting, and they seem in their way to have been very good warriors. They were light, active, and bold; they carried light arms, too; for as Wales is full of mountains, and at that time was also full of bogs, heavy-armed men and horses could not have got on at all. If they ever happened to be at peace, they still "meditated on war," and the young men were always practicing themselves in climbing mountains and enduring all sorts of fatigues and hardships. They thought it a disgrace to die in bed.

They dearly loved their country, as most mountaineers do, and they dearly loved their liberty; and they liked fighting and plundering so well that they were very troublesome neighbors to the English. But with all this quarrelsomeness they seem to have been pleasant people, with tastes and ways that were very charming and refined. They loved music as much as the Irish did. Their chief instrument was the harp, and Gerald says they could play it in a most skillful and beautiful way, besides which they could sing very harmoniously in parts.

They were naturally a bright, quick, clever people, and remarkably kind and hospitable. It must have been very pleasant to spend a day in a Welsh family. If a visitor came in the morning he was entertained all day "with the conversation of young women

and the music of the harp, for every house had its young women and harps allotted for this purpose." This sounds very agreeable, but they certainly appear to have feasted the mind better than the body. They did not get much to eat till supper-time, and even then "the kitchen does not supply many dishes nor high-seasoned incitements to eating. The house is not furnished with tables, cloths, nor napkins. The dishes are placed before them all at once, upon rushes and fresh grass, in large platters or trenches." The principal food was a sort of thin cake of bread, with chopped meat and broth. They were also very temperate in their drink. All the time the guests were eating the host and hostess stood up, "paying unremitting attention to everything, and taking no food till all the company are satisfied, that in case of any deficiency it may fall upon them." They also took great pains to amuse their visitors with witty conversation and jokes, to make them laugh. The archdeacon takes the trouble to tell us some of their jokes; but they, it must be owned, do not seem to have been quite as witty as he thought them. One of the best of them is how a person, "wishing to hint at the avaricious disposition of the mistress of a house, said, 'I only find fault with our hostess for putting too little butter to her salt.'" Fearing we may miss the point of this joke he kindly explains it by adding the learned remark, "whereas the accessory should be put to the principal." There was also a kind of riddle about their little boats, which were so light that a strong salmon could overset one with his tail, and which the fisherman could carry on his shoulders. "There is amongst us a people who, when they go out in search of prey, carry their horses on their backs to the place of plunder; in order to catch their prey they leap upon their horses, and when it is taken carry their horses home again upon their shoulders."

But the chief glory of the Welsh was their poetry. Some of their songs were bright and joyous, full of love for beautiful things; for the mountains and the sea, the wild birds and the wild flowers, apple-blossoms and clover, and wood anemones, and for lovely maidens. But as they loved other things too, very different from these sweet and peaceful ones, they had also songs full of war and battle, and fierce love of country and liberty.

Such were the people who, protected by their mountain fastnesses, had hitherto defied every attempt of the English

kings to effect their conquest. The southern part of Wales had been partly subdued by the English barons who had settled on its borders and waged war with its princes; but in the north there was no check upon the liberty of the Welsh people, who were in the habit of breaking across the borders of their own country to plunder the lands of the "Saxons," as they still called their English neighbors. It was toward this part of Wales that Edward in person led his army. The Welsh bands defended themselves for some time in the mountains of Snowdon, but at length they were defeated, and the "land of Wales" was united to the English crown.

### THE CONQUEST OF WALES.

Upon the approach of Edward, the Welsh prince took refuge among the inaccessible mountains of Snowdon, and there resolved to maintain his ground, without trusting to the chance of battle. These were the steep retreats that had for many ages before defended his ancestors against all the attempts of the Norman and Saxon conquerors. But Edward, equally vigorous and cautious, having explored every part of his way, pierced into the very center of Llewelyn's territories, and approached the Welsh army in its last retreat. Llewelyn at first little regarded the progress of an enemy that he supposed would make a transient invasion and then depart; but this contempt was turned into consternation when he saw Edward place his forces at the foot of the mountains and surround his army in order to force it by famine. Destitute of magazines, and cooped up in a narrow corner of the country, without provisions for his troops or pasturage for his cattle, nothing remained but death or submission; so that the unfortunate Welsh prince, without being able to strike a blow for his independence, was at last obliged to submit at discretion, and to receive such terms as the victor was pleased to impose. Llewelyn consented to pay fifty thousand pounds as a satisfaction for damages; to do homage to the crown of England; to permit all other barons, except four near Snowdon, to swear fealty in the same manner; to relinquish the country between Cheshire and the River Conway; to do justice

to his own family; and to deliver hostages for the security of his submission.

But this treaty was only of short duration: the oppression of the conqueror and the indignant pride of the conquered nation could not long remain without producing new dissensions. The lords of the Marches committed all kinds of injustice on their Welsh neighbors; and although Edward remitted the fifty thousand pounds, he laid other restrictions some time after upon Llewelyn which that prince considered as more injurious. He particularly exacted a promise from him at Worcester that he would retain (A. D. 1281) no person in his principality that should be disagreeable to the English monarch. These were insults too great to be endured, and once more the Welsh flew to arms. A body of their forces took the field under the command of David, the brother of the prince, ravaged the plain country, took the castle of Hawarden, made Sir Roger Clifford, justice of the Marches, who was very dangerously wounded, their prisoner, and soon after laid siege to the castle of Rhudlan. An account of these hostilities being quickly brought to Edward, he assembled a numerous army, and set out with a resolution to exterminate Llewelyn and his whole family, and to reduce that people to such an abject state that they should never after be able to revolt or distress their peaceable neighbors. At first, however, the king's endeavors (A. D. 1282) were not attended with their usual success; having caused a bridge of boats to be laid over the Menai Frith, a body of forces, commanded by Lord Latimer and De Thorne, passed over before it was finished, to signalize their courage against the enemy. The Welsh patiently remained in their fastnesses till they saw the tide flowing in beyond the end of the bridge, and thus cutting off the retreat of the assailants. It was then that they poured down from the mountains with hideous outcries, and with the most ungovernable fury put the whole body that had gotten over to the sword. This defeat revived the sinking spirits of the Welsh, and it was now universally believed by that superstitious people that heaven had declared in their favor. A story ran that it was foretold in the prophecies of Merlin that Llewelyn was to be the restorer of Brutus' empire in Britain; a wizard had prognosticated that he should ride through the streets of London with a crown upon his head. These were inducements sufficiently strong to persuade this prince to hazard a decisive battle against the English. With this view he marched into Radnorshire, and, passing the River Wye, his

troops were surprised and defeated by Edward Mortimer while he himself was absent from his army upon a conference with some of the barons of that county. Upon his return, seeing the dreadful situation of his affairs, he ran desperately into the midst of the enemy, and quickly found that death he so ardently sought for. One of the English captains, recognizing his countenance, severed his head from his body, and it was sent to London, where it was received with extreme demonstrations of joy. The brutal spirit of the times will sufficiently appear from the barbarity of citizens on this occasion; the head being encircled in a silver coronet, to fulfil the prediction of a wizard, it was placed by them upon a pillory, that the populace might glut their eyes with such an agreeable spectacle. David, the brother of this unfortunate prince, soon after shared the same fate; while his followers, quite dispirited by the loss of their beloved leader, obeyed but slowly and fought with reluctance. Being at last totally abandoned, he was obliged to hide himself in one of the obscure caverns of the country; but his retreat being soon after discovered, he was taken, tried, and condemned as a traitor. His sentence was executed with the most rigorous severity; he was hanged, drawn, and quartered, only for having bravely defended the expiring liberties of his native country and his own hereditary possessions. With him expired the government and the distinction of his nation. It was soon after united to the kingdom of England, made a principality, and given to the eldest son of the crown. Foreign conquest might add to the glory, but this added to the felicity, of the kingdom. The Welsh were now blended with the conquerors; and in the revolution of a few ages all national animosity was entirely forgotten.—GOLDSMITH.

Soon after the conquest of Wales Edward banished all the Jews from the kingdom.* Upward of 16,000 were driven away, and it is said that very few of this number reached the shores of France. Many were wrecked, others were robbed and thrown overboard. An old chronicler tells us how one shipmaster treated a crew of wealthy Jews. He says he learned the story from a manuscript written at the time:

* Their place as money-lenders was supplied by some Italian bankers, called Lombards; it is thus that the bankers' street in London is called Lombard-street.

Some of the richest of the Jews, being shipped in a mighty tall ship which they had hired, when the same was under sail, and had got down the Thames toward the mouth of the river, the master mariner bethought him of a wile, and caused his men to cast anchor, and so rode at the same till the ship, by ebbing of the stream, remained on the dry sands. The master then enticed the Jews to walk out with him for recreation. And at length, when the Jews were on the sands, and he understood the tide to be coming in, he gat him back to the ship whither he was drawn by a rope. The Jews made not so much haste, because they were not aware of the danger; but when they perceived how the matter stood they cried to the master for help. He, however, told them that they ought to cry rather upon Moses, by whose guidance their fathers had passed through the Red Sea. They cried, indeed, but no succor appeared, and so they were swallowed up by the water.

## III. Edward I. and Scotland.

In his later years Edward was led to attempt the conquest of Scotland. His schemes against the freedom of this country furnished him with hard work for the rest of his life, and yet did not succeed after all. It so happened that there was a contest among the Scotch nobles for the crown of the country, and it was so hard to decide who ought to have it that they asked Edward to choose among them. There were thirteen claimants in all; but the choice really lay between two cousins, John Baliol and Robert Bruce. According to birth the right clearly belonged to John Baliol, and to him Edward gave the crown; but on terms that made him a vassal of England. Baliol was soon made to feel all the humiliation of his position; and the discontent of the Scotch nobles equaling his own, he sent to Edward a formal renunciation of homage in his own name and theirs. In a few months Edward was on his march to Scotland.

Before we follow him, let us learn who his Scottish foes were, and what was their mode of warfare.

## THE SCOTS.

The race that took the chief part in fighting against Edward were of the same origin as the English themselves. It was Lothian —as the country that lies between the Tweed and the Forth was called—and the lowlands of Aberdeenshire, that sent forth the most stubborn foes to Edward. This Lothian had once been a part of England; for the name "Scotland" up to the tenth century meant only Ireland; as late as the Conqueror's time it meant only that part of modern Scotland which stretches from the Forth to the Spey. But in Edward I.'s time Scotland took in Lothian as well. So men came to call themselves *Scots* who were really as much of English blood as the men of Kent. Their speech was English; their form of government was like that of the English. They had even gone through a kind of Norman Conquest; for in the twelfth century Norman chiefs had gone to Scotland to see what they could win for themselves. They had won lands and titles there, and had got on so well that in a hundred years most of the chief Scottish nobles were Norman by birth and habits. But the common folk of the lowlands, even of those north of the Forth, were mostly Teutonic. These men had become proud of their independence, and now fought for it. They now held themselves aloof from both the Highlanders of the north and north-west and the men of Galloway on the west, many of whom even took the English side in the quarrel; and, after keeping up a seemingly hopeless struggle for years, they won in the end.

Nor were the English and Scots as yet much divided in feeling from each other. They were far from being such deadly foes as they afterward became. Indeed, things had rather gone to bring them together than to keep them asunder. Most of the rulers of Scotland for two hundred years had been English barons as well as Scottish kings. Many of their nobles had as great an interest in the English as in the Scottish kingdom, since they owned broad lands in both. The names of Bruce and Baliol are often found in the roll of fighters on one side or the other in the wars of the English barons with their king. For one hundred years, too, there was unbroken peace between the kindred peoples, for it was King Alexander's alliance with his brother barons of England that drew upon Scotland the furious foray of 1216.—ROWLEY.

This is Froissart's description of the mode in which the Scots carried on their warfare:

These Scottish men are right hardy and sore traveling in harness and in wars; for when they will enter into England, within a day and a night they will drive their whole host twenty-four miles, for they are all a-horseback, without it be the traundells and laggers of the host, who follow after afoot. The knights and squires are well horsed, and the common people and others, on little hacks and geldings; and they carry with them no carts, no chariots, for the diversities of the mountains they must pass through in the country of Northumberland. They take with them no purveyance of bread nor wine; for their usage and soberness is such in time of war that they will pass in the journey a great long time with flesh half-sodden, without bread, and drink of the river water without wine; and they neither care for pots nor pans, for they seethe beasts in their own skins. They are ever sure to find plenty of beasts in the country that they will pass through. Therefore they carry with them none other purveyance, but on their horse, between the saddle and the panel, they truss a broad plate of metal, and behind the saddle they will have a little sack full of oatmeal, to the intent that when they have eaten of the sodden flesh, then they lay this plate on the fire, and temper a little of the oatmeal; and when the plate is hot, they cast off the thin paste thereon, and so make a little cake in manner of a cracknel or biscuit, and that they eat to comfort withal their stomachs. Wherefore, it is no great marvel though they make greater journeys than other people do.

Edward found very little difficulty in conquering the Scots. He "took the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed by force of arms, without tarrying," and then went as far north as Elgin, every-where victorious. At Brechin or Montrose "there came to him King John of Scotland to his mercy, and did render quietly the realm of Scotland as he that had done amiss." After King John's surrender Edward sent his military leader "to search the country," and he himself "went into places" where there was no

more than three houses in a row between two mountains. Then, "as no rebels showed themselves," he returned to England, having "conquered and searched the kingdom of Scotland, as is aforesaid, in twenty-one weeks without any more." The government of the subjected kingdom was left in the hands of the Earl of Surrey. The crown and scepter which John Baliol had surrendered were carried into England. The sacred stone, "the stone of destiny," on which the Scottish kings were seated at their inauguration, was removed from Scone to Westminster.

### THE SACRED STONE.

In Edward the Confessor's chapel in Westminster Abbey are to be seen two ancient chairs, one of them especially being very old and worn. These are called the Coronation Chairs, and in one of them the king or queen of England always sits to be crowned. If we look at the seat of that one we see a rough block of stone, not carved or sculptured, not beautiful marble, merely a rude block of common limestone. That stone Edward brought from Scotland, and the loss of it nearly broke the hearts of the Scotch. They tried again and again to bring it back, but the Londoners would never give it up. We may suppose, therefore, that it had a value not of its own. And indeed it has a strange and poetical history which makes us feel even now, as we look at it, that it is more precious than the choicest piece of new or polished marble. This stone was called in Scotland the Stone of Destiny, and on it all the Scottish sovereigns had sat to be crowned and consecrated. In all times, in the early history of almost all people, we hear of sacred stones. We often read in the Bible of stones being reared up as memorials of remarkable events. This was a sacred stone of the early Scotch people. They believed that it was the very stone which Jacob took for his pillow when he saw the ladder and the angels. They told how it had been carried from Bethel to Egypt, from Egypt to Spain, from Spain to Ireland, from Ireland to Scotland. It was a magical stone, and in old times it had done wonderful things. The hearts of the Scotch people clung to the sacred stone.

Edward took it away. He had already hung up in the Confessor's chapel the golden crown of the Welsh prince; now he placed there the royal stone of Scotland. The other things which Edward brought away from Scotland, even a precious fragment of the true cross, which was called the "Holy Rood," were afterward given back to the Scotch. They tried and strove to get their precious stone back; but no, "the people of London would by no means whatever allow that to depart from themselves." There was an old prophecy in Scotland, that wherever the stone was the Scotch should be supreme; and when, three hundred years after this time, a Scotch king sat upon it, and was crowned king of England in Westminster Abbey, the Scotch had the pleasure of thinking the prophecy was fulfilled. When we look at that old stone, though we need not believe that Jacob's head ever lay upon it, when we try to think of the generations and generations of people who have gazed upon it with reverence—the wild Irish of old, the half-wild and patriotic Scotch, the brave and serious English; of the sovereigns who have been enthroned on it, from the old savage times, when they still thought the stone would groan aloud if a false pretender sat upon it, down to our good Queen Victoria, we cannot help feeling, like the Scotch and the Londoners of old, that it is too precious a thing to be lightly parted with.—M. J. GUEST.

## THE WAR OF SCOTTISH INDEPENDENCE—WILLIAM WALLACE.

"The Scot is subdued,
But there lingers a feud."

So wrote an old chronicler, when he recorded the history of Edward's first conquest of Scotland, and it was true. "Castles, hostages, regalia, were the king of England's. But the heart of the people was not his. The conquest was not accomplished." Edward soon found that he had all his work to do over again; for there had risen up in Scotland a hero, and "thousands of hard-handed Scotsmen, with blue bonnets over their brows, and good claymores in their hands, were flocking to his standard." His name was William Wallace; a name that "even yet

makes the heart of the cautious manufacturer of Paisley or the laborious tradesman in Dundee leap up with a throb of exultation." Wallace was a man from the middle ranks. An old ballad says "he was cummyn of gentilmen."

"His Fadyr was a manly Knyght,
His Modyre was a Lady Bryght."

Though not of noble birth, many Scottish nobles were among his followers; and out of the warfare which he began "was engendered the spirit which finally made Scotland free."

William Wallace, the son of a knight who had a small estate called Ellerslie, in Renfrewshire, stung into action by his own or his country's wrongs, got together an armed band and began that career which has given him an undying name in history. After one or two notable deeds of daring, he made a dash on Scone, chased Ormsby from the town, and seized the treasure that lay there. He was then joined by Sir William Douglas, an outlaw like himself; and the movement soon swelled into a national rising. Warenne happened to be in England at this time; but by King Edward's orders he went at once with all the force he could muster to crush the rebellion. He had got as far as Stirling Bridge, and his men were slowly marching across, when Wallace, who had posted his followers at Cambuskenneth, made a rush toward the head of the bridge, seized it, and cut to pieces those who had crossed. Cressingham was killed; and the panic-stricken English who were still on the safe side of the stream fled in disorder. The strongholds lost so easily the year before were retaken; and Wallace carried the war into the northern counties of England. Here his men killed, burned, and wasted without mercy. Returning to Scotland, he took, or was given, the title of guardian, and during the winter was all the king the country had. In 1298, however, his career ended. For Edward then came himself with a mighty host, and, though baffled for a time by his enemy, who made the country a desert before him, and cautiously avoided a battle, he got him within his grasp at Falkirk. The patriot army fought nobly, but was almost destroyed. Among the few who escaped

from the field was Wallace; but we hear no more of him for some years. His work for Scotland was done.

Falkirk was a barren victory. Famine drove Edward back to England; and for five years no further serious effort was made to conquer Scotland. There was certainly some fighting in Galloway, where Caerlaverock Castle was besieged and taken in 1300. It would seem, too, that the English were still masters of the country south of the Forth. But in 1303 Edward again invaded Scotland. His troops had in February met with a slight reverse near Roslin; but he pushed boldly on, nevertheless. Marching very swiftly, he passed through Edinburgh, crossed the Forth above Stirling, and found no enemy until he came to Brechin, which made a gallant defense until its commander was killed. Stirling Castle alone held out, but was left untouched as yet. Next year the Scottish nobles made a formal surrender of the country to Edward at Strathorde; and the siege of Stirling was undertaken. Stirling was no easy place to take; its governor, Oliphant, and the few valiant men who served with him, withstood the whole might of Edward for ninety days. Hunger at last forced them to yield; they were sent to England, and a second time Edward had Scotland in his power.

He dealt very gently with it. Taking as his advisers three Scotsmen—one of whom was Robert Bruce, Earl of Carrick, soon to be famous—he brought together a mixed body of Scots and English, and with their help drew up a plan for ruling his conquest that is marked by kindliness as well as wisdom. His hope was that the two peoples would in time become one; and his scheme of government was designed to hasten this happy issue.—ROWLEY.

But for William Wallace there was no mercy. Sir William Wallace, alone, or with a very small band of followers, refused either to acknowledge the usurper Edward, or to lay down his arms. He continued to maintain himself among the woods and mountains of his native country for no less than seven years after his defeat at Falkirk, and for more than one year after all the other defenders of Scottish liberty had laid down their arms. Many proclamations were sent out against him by the English, and a great reward was set upon his head; for Edward did not think he could have any secure possession of his usurped kingdom of Scotland while Wallace lived. At length he was taken prisoner; and, shame it is to say, a Scotchman, called Sir John Menteith, was the person by

whom he was seized and delivered to the English. It is generally said that he was made prisoner at Robroyston, near Glasgow; and the tradition of the country bears, that the signal made for rushing upon him and taking him at unawares, was, when one of his pretended friends who betrayed him should turn a loaf, which was placed on a table, with its bottom or flat side uppermost. And in aftertimes it was reckoned ill-breeding to turn a loaf in that manner, if there was a person named Menteith in company; since it was as much as to remind him that his namesake had betrayed Sir William Wallace, the champion of Scotland.

Whether Sir John Menteith was actually the person by whom Wallace was betrayed, is not perfectly certain. He was, however, the individual by whom the patriot was made prisoner and delivered up to the English, for which his name and his memory have been long loaded with disgrace.

Edward having thus obtained possession of the person whom he considered as the greatest obstacle to his complete conquest of Scotland, resolved to make Wallace an example to all Scottish patriots who should in future venture to oppose his ambitious projects. He caused this gallant defender of his country to be brought to trial in Westminster Hall, before the English judges, and produced him there, crowned, in mockery, with a green garland, because they said he had been king of outlaws and robbers among the Scottish woods. Wallace was accused of having been a traitor to the English crown; to which he answered, "I could not be a traitor to Edward, for I was never his subject." He was then charged with having taken and burned towns and castles, with having killed many men, and done much violence. He replied, with the same calm resolution, "that it was true he had killed very many Englishmen, but it was because they had come to subdue and oppress his native country of Scotland; and far from repenting what he had done, he declared he was only sorry that he had not put to death many more of them."

Notwithstanding that Wallace's defense was a good one, both in law and in common sense, (for surely every one has not only a right to fight in defense of his native country, but is bound in duty to do so,) the English judges condemned him to be executed. So this brave patriot was dragged upon a sledge to the place of execution, where his head was struck off and his body divided into four quarters, which, according to the cruel custom of the time, were

exposed upon spikes of iron on London Bridge, and were termed the limbs of a traitor.—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Various estimates have been formed of Wallace, and the circumstances attending his career have been differently told by Scotch and English writers. Lingard, who examined and searched with wonderful diligence through whatever materials were calculated to throw light upon English history, and who sifted all the evidence bearing upon the subject with nice discrimination, writes thus of Wallace:

It may, perhaps, offend the national partiality of some of my readers, but I greatly suspect that Wallace owes his celebrity as much to his execution as to his exploits. Of all the Scottish chieftains who had hitherto deserved and experienced the enmity of Edward, he alone perished on the gallows; and on this account his fate called forth and monopolized the sympathy of his countrymen. They revered him as the proto-martyr of their independence; his blood animated them to vengeance; the huts and glens, the forests and mountains, which he had frequented, became consecrated in their eyes; and as the remembrance of his real exploits gradually faded, the aid of fiction was employed to embellish and eternize the character of the hero. If we may believe the Scottish writers who lived a century or two after his death, he was gigantic in stature, powerful of limb, and patient of fatigue beyond his contemporaries. He knew no passion but the love of his country. His soul was superior to bribery or insult; and at the call of liberty he was as ready to serve in the ranks as to assume the command of the army. His courage possessed a talismanic power which led his followers to attempt and execute the most hazardous enterprises, and which on Stainmom compelled the king and army of England to flee from his presence, even before they entered upon action. Under so brave and accomplished a leader Scotland might have been saved; she was lost through the jealousy of her nobles, who chose to crouch in chains to a foreign despot rather than owe their deliverance to a man of inferior family. Of all this a part may perhaps be true, but it is derived from no credible authority; much must be false, because it is contradicted by real history. The only great

battles in which Wallace is *known* to have fought, are those of Sterling and Falkirk. In the first he was victorious; but he must share the glory of the action with Sir Andrew Moray, who was certainly his equal in command, perhaps his superior. In the second he was defeated; and the defeat was the most disastrous that Scotland ever experienced.

### DEATH AND CHARACTER OF EDWARD I.

For a while after the death of Wallace all seemed quiet. But in Edward's last years a new and more successful hero of Scottish history, Robert Bruce, led his countrymen in another attempt at independence. Edward was now in failing health; but he roused himself to make one more effort to realize the great desire of his life, and started once again for Scotland. But "he merely reached the English shore of the Solway Firth, from which the blue hills of Scotland could be seen across a narrow sea, and there he died."

Edward I. died at a place called Burgh-on-the-Sands, on one side of the Solway Firth. There he gave his dying commands to his son. One of them was that his heart should be carried to the Holy Land, where he had been on the Crusade in his young days with Eleanor; but his bones were to be wrapped in a bull's hide and carried forward at the head of his army until Scotland was subdued. He seems to have thought that the mere sight of his bones would terrify the Scotch, whom he had so often conquered. This command, though a harsh and vindictive one, did not seem quite so strange in those days as it does to us. It was the custom then to think a great deal of what became of a man's body after he was dead. Bruce himself afterward wished his heart to be carried to the Holy Land. When Richard I. died he had ordered his body to be divided into parts, and buried in different places: his heart was carried to the city of Rouen, which had always been faithful to him, and which he loved; his body was laid at his father's feet in token of submission and duty; and the "more ignoble parts" were buried among his rebellious subjects at Poitou. So that a man's burial was a kind of symbol or token of his last feelings and

thoughts. Edward, whose dying effort had been to conquer the Scotch, wished his bones to still carry on the work.

But none of this was done. They carried his body back from the Solway Sands, and for sixteen weeks it lay at Waltham Abbey, by the grave of Harold, the last of the old English kings. Then it was conveyed to Westminster and buried near his father. His tomb is not beautiful, like some of the others; it looks almost like "a sepulcher hewn out of a rock," and on it is carved in Latin, "This is the hammer of the Scotch people."—GUEST.

A worthy prince he was, fixed in his generation betwixt a weak father and a son; as if made wise and valiant by their antiperistasis; equally fortunate in drawing and sheathing the sword in war and peace, having taught the English loyalty, by them almost forgotten; and the Welsh subjection, which they never learned before. In himself religiously disposed; founded the famous abbey of Vale Royal for the Cistercians in Cheshire, and by will bequeathing thirty-two thousand pounds to the holy war; obedient, not servile, to the see of Rome; a foe to pride, and friend to the profession of the clergy, whom he watered with his bounty, but would not have to spread so broad as to jostle, or grow so high as to overtop, the regal authority; dying, in due time for himself, almost seventy years old; but too soon for his subjects, especially for his son, whose giddy youth lacked a guide to direct him. In a word, as the arm of King Edward I. was accounted the measure of a yard, generally received in England, so his actions are an excellent model and a praiseworthy platform for succeeding princes to imitate.—THOMAS FULLER.

Edward had in him the two wisdoms — not often found in any singly; both together, seldom or never—an ability of judgment in himself, and a readiness to hear the judgment of others.—BAKER.

His greatness was not without an element which sets it far above all the greatness that arises from mere success; he had it to learn, and he learned, to rule himself, to cast away his own cherished idea of reigning, and faithfully and honorably abide by the conditions which, although forced upon him, he saw at last were needed for the true realization of his character as a national king. He was not free from faults; it is no small part of his grandeur that, in a nature so strong as his, and with temptations so powerful as those which were presented to him, those faults had so little

sway. . . . His mistakes were few, and his failures fewer still. Yet . . . he did not realize all that he hoped. Nor was his actual contribution to national progress exactly what he designed. There are dark lines in his history as well as bright ones. Of his schemes some were too early, some too late, for success; and in some points he drew the outline rather than built the fabric that was to last. Still his reign is a great era; he is the great lawgiver, the great politician, the great organizer, of the mediæval English polity.—STUBBS.

## IV. EDWARD II., A. D. 1307–1327.

Edward II. was a weak and bad king. His reign, such as it is, may be summed up in the words of the Rev. James White:

Weak, bigoted, effeminate, he united, as might be expected, the presumption that such a complication of qualities is sure to produce in a man of his position with the reliance on flatterers and favorites which is certain to terminate in disgrace. He pursued the plans of conquest entertained by his father, carried an army of a hundred thousand men across the border, and was defeated at the famous battle of Bannockburn by Bruce and the Scots. As pusillanimous in misfortune as he had been insulting in power, he secured his safety by flight, acknowledged Bruce as king, and withdrew all claims of sovereignty or superiority over the kingdom he had attacked. Swayed first by one sycophant whom the nobles expelled from England and finally put to death near Warwick—and then by another family who heaped all the riches of the kingdom upon themselves, till vengeance overtook them also on the scaffold—then opposed by his wife, a princess of France, and deprived of all his adherents, he yielded himself a prisoner, one of the worst and most dishonored of our kings, and closed an ignominious life by a dark and doubtful death in the castle of Berkeley, in Gloucestershire.

Professor Stubbs in his "History of the Early Plantagenets," writes thus of Edward's reign:

The reign of Edward II. is chiefly important as a period of transition. It winds up much that was left undone by his father; it is

the seed-time of the influences which ripened under his son. The constitutional acts of 1309, 1310, and 1311 are the supplement to those of 1297; the tragedy of Piers Gaveston and Earl Thomas is the primary cause of much of the personal history that follows. So, too, the reign closes the great interest of Scottish warfare, and contains the germ of the long struggle with France. But viewed by itself its tragic interest is the greatest; and it is rich in moral and material lessons. It tell us that the greatest sin for which a king can be brought to account is not personal vice or active tyranny, but the dereliction of kingly duty; the selfish policy which treats the nation as if it were made for him, not he for the nation. It is the greatest sin and the greatest folly, for it at once draws down the penalty and leaves the sinner incapable of avoiding it or resisting it; it leaves the nation to be oppressed by countless tyrants, and is by so much worse than the tyranny of one. It allows the corruption of justice at the fountain's head.

Dr. Russell, in his "History of Modern Europe," thus writes concerning the character and misfortunes of Edward II.:

Edward was evidently by nature unfit to hold the reins of government. He was sensible of his own defects, and sought to be governed; yet every favorite whom he successively chose was regarded as a fellow-subject exalted above his rank and station, and became the object of envy to the chief nobility. His wife first dishonored, next invaded, and then dethroned, her husband; she made her infant son an instrument in this unnatural treatment of his father; and by false pretenses seduced the nation into rebellion against their sovereign, whose weakness was his only crime. It is not easy for imagination to figure a man more innocent and inoffensive, or a prince less fitted for governing a fierce and turbulent people.

Edward's favorites, Gaveston and the Despensers, were the chief cause of the disturbances of his reign. We will pass over their personal history. The sum of their influences may be read in the general misery of the times, which the following sketch describes.

## THE EVIL TIMES OF EDWARD II.

In the annals of our country there is no era of twenty years so full of revolution and counter-revolution; of imbecile authority struggling with lawless force; of bitter hatreds and outraged affections; of proscriptions and executions and secret murders. Such a system of misrule, approaching at times to a state of anarchy, must of necessity have been accompanied by wide-spread corruption and general misery. There is a contemporary English poem, "On the Evil Times of Edward II.," which describes briefly, but emphatically, some of the class-iniquities and national calamities of the days of Gaveston and the Despensers. According to this picture of manners, the fiend showed his mastery, and raised such a strife that every lording was busy his own life to save; each was provoked to murder the other and would spare none for kindred. While these great lordings were hurled on a heap, the prelates of the holy Church were blinded with coveteousness. And then came a murrain of cattle and a dearth of corn, and poor simple men were a-hungered. God was wroth with the world, for pride had driven peace and love and charity out of the land. This quaint old rhymer speaks as a bitter satirist, but with a circumstantial precision which shows that he wrote from his own observation. Truth, he says, is forbidden the court of Rome, and the truth dare not be seen among the cardinals. Simony and covetise have the world at their will. When a church is vacant, he that gives most to patron and bishop has the preferment. Abbots and priors ride with horses and hounds as if they were knights, while poor men cower at the abbey gate all day in hunger and in cold. Who is fatter and ruddier than monks, canons, and priors? In each town, says the rhymer, I wot none easier life than is religion. Of sin deans and chapters take no account, and a man who has silver may serve the fiend long enough. As he satirizes the Church so he is equally severe upon baron and knight. He accuses them even of cowardice; they are lions in hall and hares in the field. Knighthood is debased and lame of foot. There is a new cut of sqiuerie in every town—gentlemen that should be, that are swollen with pride, and have cast nurture into the ditch. Justices, sheriffs, mayors, and bailiffs—they know how to make the dark night out of the fair day. If the king raises a taxation it is so twitted away that half is stolen ere it is accounted for—there are so many partners.

The rich are spared, the poor are robbed. Every man is ready to fill his own purse, and the king has the least part, and he hath all the curse. The pleader at the bar takes forty pence to speak a word or two for no good; and the false attorneys make men begin a suit they never would have thought of, and they get their silver for naught. The assizers condemn men for money, and the rich justice will do wrong for a bribe. Sometime there were chapmen that truly bought and sold; traffic was once maintained with truth; but now is all turned to treachery. So, concludes the satirist, is all the world blinded. We give a specimen of this curious production of the English language of the fourteenth century:

Pride hath in his paunter * kaught † the heje and the lowe,
So that unnethe ‡ can any man God Almihti knowe.
Pride priketh § about, wid nithe ‖ and wid onde; ¶
Pes and love and charité hien ** hem out of loude so faste
That God wole †† for-don ‡‡ the world we muwe §§ be sore ‖‖ agaste.—KNIGHT.

### ROBERT BRUCE AND BANNOCKBURN.

We have now to notice the chief event of Edward's reign, the battle of Bannockburn. But first let us return to Robert Bruce.

During the five years that the peace of England was disturbed by the wretched contest between the king and his barons, which ended in the first signal tragedy of this tragic reign, Robert Bruce was establishing his power in Scotland with a firmness and wisdom that was scarcely to be looked for after the rash murder in the church at Dumfries. But he had endured great adversity. Danger and suffering had taught him prudence and moderation. He had wandered in the Highlands with a few followers, subsisting upon the chance products of the chase. He had traversed the great lakes in leaky boats, sheltering from the storm in the fisher's hovel, and deriving lessons of patience and perseverance from noting the efforts of a spider to fix the first thread on which its web was to be

* *Paunter*, pantry. † *Kauht*, caught. ‡ *Unnethe*, scarcely.
§ *Priketh*, rideth. ‖ *Nithe*, strife. ¶ *Onde*, envy.
** *Hien*, haste. †† *Wole*, will. ‡‡ *For-don*, destroy.
§§ *Muwe*, may. ‖‖ *Agaste*, afraid.

woven. He had been hunted by bloodhounds; he had waded in rapid streams to elude their scent; he had defied his enemies single-handed in the mountain-pass and in the river ford. The fugitive was now an acknowledged sovereign; recognized as king by the most influential body of Scotland—the clergy—at a general ecclesiastical council held at Dundee. In that year a truce was concluded between England and Scotland, which endured till August, 1310. The renewed war was for some time a succession of contests on the borders, in which exemption from plunder was purchased by the English lords-warden by money payment. In 1312 Bruce besieged Perth, which was in the hands of King Edward's officers. The town was strongly fortified, and was surrounded by a moat. Bruce, in a dark night of October, led his men across the moat in a manner which is graphically described, according to Barbour, by "a wight and hardy knight of France" who was in Bruce's service. The knight "seeing the king first try the depth with his spear, and then pass with his ladder in his hand into the water, crossed himself in wonder, and exclaimed, 'Good Lord, what shall we now say of our carpet-companions in France, whose time is devoted to the stuffing their paunches with rich viands, to the dance, and the wine-cup, when so valiant and worthy a knight thus exposes himself to such imminent peril to win a poor collection of huts!'" One after another, the strong places of Scotland were taken by Bruce. —KNIGHT.

And now only Stirling was left in the hands of the English; and that was closely besieged by the Scots. Edward resolved to save this castle; and marched into Scotland himself, at the head of a great army. Here is Sir Walter Scott's graphic description of Edward's army:

"Bruce dispatched James of Douglas, and Sir Robert Keith, the Mareschal of the Scottish army, in order that they might survey, as nearly as they could, the English force which was now approaching from Falkirk. They returned with information that the approach of that vast host was one of the most beautiful and terrible sights which could be seen—that the whole country seemed covered with men-at-arms on horse and foot—that the number of standards, banners, and pennons, (all flags of different kinds,)

made so gallant a show, that the bravest and most numerous host in Christendom might be alarmed to see King Edward moving against them."

He also shows us very clearly with what sound judgment Bruce had chosen his ground.

"Bruce on his part studied how he might supply, by address and stratagem, what he wanted in numbers and strength. He knew the superiority of the English, both in their heavy-armed cavalry, which were much better mounted and armed than that of the Scots, and in their archers, which were better trained than any others in the world. Both these disadvantages he resolved to provide against. With this purpose he led his army down into a plain near Stirling, called the Park, near which, and beneath it, the English army must needs pass through a boggy country, broken with water-courses, while the Scots occupied hard, dry ground. He then caused all the ground upon the front of his line of battle, where cavalry were likely to act, to be dug full of holes about as deep as a man's knee. They were filled with light brush-wood, and the turf was laid on the top so that it appeared a plain field, while in reality it was all full of these pits as a honeycomb is of holes. He also, it is said, caused steel spikes, called caltrops, to be scattered up and down in the plain, where the English cavalry were most likely to advance, trusting in that manner to lame and destroy their horses.

"When the Scottish army was drawn up the line stretched north and south. On the south it was terminated by the banks of the brook called Bannockburn, which are so rocky that no troops could attack them there. On the left the Scottish line extended near to the town of Stirling."

Charles Knight thus describes the battle of Bannockburn:

"On the night of St. John the advance guard of the English cavalry approached Stirling, with the intention of attacking the Scots in the rear. Bruce's army had fasted from a religious principle. 'Thar dynit none of them that day,' says the rhyming chronicler. A partial engagement took place, in which King Robert exposed himself as became the daring knight rather than the cautious general. His leaders, however they were rejoiced to see him cleave the skull

of Henry de Bohun in single combat, remonstrated with him on his temerity. He only held up the broken shaft of his battle-ax, and expressed his regret for the loss of his good weapon.

"At day-break of the 24th of June the great host of the English was in view, with bright shields and burnished helmets, embroidered banners and gaudy surcoats, glittering in the morning sun. The Scotch host heard mass, and the abbot of Inchaffray preceded them with a crucifix as they formed on the field of battle. When they knelt again in prayer some of the English said, 'They beg for mercy.' 'Deceive not yourselves,' said one who knew the people; 'it is God only they supplicate, and not you.' On came the English archers and infantry, and the conflict was long and desperate. Bruce had a reserve which attacked his enemy in flank. The English knights came on with the Earl of Gloucester, the nephew of the king, at their head. He fell covered with wounds. The horses stumbled in the pits which Bruce had dug. There was confusion in the ranks; and the few Scottish horse which were in the field were led by Sir Robert Keith to a victorious struggle. All the camp-followers of Bruce's army had been stationed apart, behind a small hill, still known by the name of Gillieshill, (the servants' hill.) There were soldiers, no doubt, mixed with them, for they suddenly abandoned the baggage, and came down the hill in a body of fifteen thousand men, armed with pikes and oxen goads, with rude pieces of cloth fixed on tent-poles in the place of heraldic banners. The English squadrons, at the appearance of this new and strange army, began to waver. Bruce charged the main body. Then ensued a general rout.

"King Edward refused to fly till the Earl of Pembroke seized his bridle-rein, and hurried him from the field. The king rode to Stirling, with the intention of throwing himself into the castle; but the governor, as the battle was lost, knew that he was bound in all honor to deliver up the castle according to his obligation, and Edward sought other refuge. The band of horsemen fled on, and never stopped till they reached Dunbar. The spoil which remained to the victors was enormous. Fordun describes the herds of cattle, the droves of sheep and hogs, the loads of corn with portable mills, the casks of wine, the military engines—trebuchets and mangonels. The slaughter of the English exceeded ten thousand. The Scots lost about four thousand. Numbers of English and Welsh fugitives were scattered over the country—the knights

detained for ransom; the humble footmen put to death by the Scottish peasantry. Stirling was surrendered the day after the battle."

The story of the spider, on whose movements the fate of Scotland is said to have hung, is given as follows in Mackenzie's "History of Scotland."

"The English, assisted by a body of Galloway men, eagerly endeavored to hunt Bruce down. Driven from haunt to haunt, weary, toil-worn, and dejected, he had retired one day into a wretched hovel to snatch some repose. There, as he lay upon a heap of straw, his mind darkly pondering on his gloomy situation, he had well-nigh resolved to abandon the whole enterprise, leave Scotland, and engage in the Crusade. A spider, hanging by its long thread from the roof of the hovel, caught his eye. The creature was endeavoring to swing itself from one rafter to another. Its movements interested the king. Six times it made its attempt and failed. Would it try once more and succeed after all? Bruce thought within himself, If this creature tries again, and succeeds in its object, I, too, will make another attempt. The history of this proud old country hung by a spider's thread. Bruce watched. The spider launched itself from its rafter the seventh time, and succeeded. The perseverance and success of the insect struck the king like a cheering omen. He thought no more of giving up his enterprise, and the strength of his mighty purpose was renewed within him. Never, surely, was little thing so great as that day in the Carrick hovel. Such is the famous tradition of Bruce and the spider."

### DEATH AND CHARACTER OF EDWARD II.

Thirteen years after his defeat at Bannockburn, Edward II. was made to resign his kingdom, and to consent to have his elder son Edward, then only a lad of fourteen, put in his place. A few months after he met a cruel death at Berkeley Castle.

The deposed monarch but a short time survived his misfortunes; he was sent from prison to prison, a wretched outcast, and the sport of his inhuman keepers. He had been at first consinged to the cus-

tody of the earl of Leicester; but this nobleman showing some marks of respect and pity, he was taken out of his hands and delivered over to Lord Berkeley, Maltravers, and Gourney, who were intrusted with the charge of guarding him, each for a month. Whatever his treatment from Lord Berkeley might have been, the other two seemed resolved that he should enjoy none of the comforts of life while in their custody. They practiced every kind of indignity upon him, as if their design had been to accelerate his death by the bitterness of his sufferings. Among other acts of brutal oppression it is said that they shaved him for sport in the open fields, using water from a neighboring ditch.* The genius of the people must have been greatly debased, or they would never have permitted such indecencies to be practiced on a monarch whose greatest fault was the violence of his friendships. He is said to have borne his former indignities with patience, but all fortitude forsook him upon this occasion. He looked upon his merciless insulters with an air of fallen majesty, and, bursting into tears, exclaimed that the time might come when he should be more decently attended. This, however, was but a vain expectation. As his persecutors saw that his death might not arrive, even under every cruelty, till a revolution had been made in his favor, they resolved to rid themselves of their fears by destroying him at once. Accordingly his two keepers, Gourney and Maltravers, repaired to Berkeley Castle, where Edward was then confined; and having concerted a method of putting him to death without any external signs of violence, they threw him on a bed, holding him down by a table which they placed over him. They then ran a horn pipe up his body through which they conveyed a red-hot iron; and thus burned his bowels without disfiguring his body. By this cruel artifice they expected to have their crime concealed; but his horrid shrieks, which were heard at a distance from the castle, soon gave a suspicion of the murder; and the

*Sir Richard Baker, in his Chronicle, thus tells the story in his quaint manner:—When Edward II. was taken, by order of his queen, and carried to Berkeley Castle, to the end that he should not be known they shaved his head and beard, and that in a most beastly manner; for they took him from his horse and set him upon a hillock, and then taking puddle-water out of a ditch thereby, they went to wash him, his barber telling him that cold water must serve for this time; whereat the miserable king, looking sternly upon him, said that whether they would or no he would have warm water to wash him; and there withal, to make good his word, he presently shed forth a shower of tears. Never was king turned out of kingdom in such a manner.

whole was soon after divulged by the confession of one of the accomplices.—GOLDSMITH.

Edward II. unfortunately possessed no single quality to make us love or respect him. He was, in every thing, the very opposite of his father, whose dying commands it was the first act of his reign to disobey. He was, seemingly, of an easy disposition, but his yielding temper was only weakness, and his semblance of good nature was rank selfishness; he was disposed to make friendships; but his fondness for his friends was so unnatural, so excessive, that he sacrificed to them his duty to his country and the respect of his subjects.—LONGMAN.

He is said to have resembled his father in the lineaments of his face as well as the exact elegance and symmetry of his shape, having a majestic and noble stature, and a deportment altogether engaging and agreeable; but the qualifications of his mind bore no kind of proportion to his bodily perfections, for he was deficient in foresight, in judgment, and in courage. His mental debility urged him to a conduct that had all the appearance of infatuation. Being a slave to his own passions, he too readily committed to others the weight of that government which he had neither the ability nor the inclination to support.—SPENCER.

A debauched prince this Edward was, his beauty being the best (not to say only) commendable thing about him. He had a handsome man case, and better it had been empty with than (as it was) ill-filled with viciousness.—FULLER.

Instead of dismissing the second Edward with the last thought of his weakness and wickedness, let us turn to a plea for forgiveness that was uttered by him while in Berkeley Castle.

Most blessed Jesu,
Roote of all vertue,
Graunte I may the sue
In all humylyte.
Sen thou for our good
Lyste to shed thy blood,
An stretch the upon the rood,
For our iniquyte,
I the beseche,
Most holsome leche,*
That thou wilt seche †
For me such grace,
That, when my body vyle
My soule shall exyle,
Thou bring in short while
It in rest and peace. ‡

* Physician. † Seek.

‡ An extract from a poem written by him during his captivity.

# CHAPTER IV.

## EDWARD III, 1327-1377.

### GUIDE ANALYSIS.

1. Battle of Cressy.
2. The Order of the Garter.
3. Edward III. and the Countess of Salisbury.
4. The Black Death.
5. The battle of Poitiers.
6. Parliamentary progress during Edward's reign.
7. Death of the Black Prince—Death of Edward III.

## I. EDWARD III., A.D. 1327–1377.

"THE reign of Edward III.," says a recent historian,* "may be considered the climax of mediæval civilization and of England's early greatness. It is the age in which chivalry attained its highest perfection. It is the period of the most brilliant achievements in war, and of the greatest development of arts and commerce before the Reformation." The character of the times was finely shown, too, in the glorious outburst of English poetry, when the first of the great English poets, Geoffrey Chaucer, displayed the power of English imagination and of the English language in a series of poems, which, in variety of feeling and scope of subject, are surpassed only by the productions of Shakespeare.† The historian who tells us most about their days of chivalry and war is Sir John Froissart.

He was a foreigner, secretary to Philippa of Hainault, the wife of Edward III. He lived in England a considerable time, but

* Gairdner, "House of Lancaster and York."

† Reed, "Lectures on English History."

traveled about also in France and other places, where there were knights and battles. We learn more about "chivalry" from him than anybody else; for though he was a priest and a scholar himself, knightly deeds, glory, and fame were the very joy of his soul. The intense delight he takes in telling his stories, his great love for noble acts, his admiration for brave and gallant knights, make his book very charming reading. He took pains to find out the truth as far as he could, (though he sometimes made mistakes nevertheless.) He evidently found the greatest possible pleasure in writing his book; indeed, he says, toward the end of it, that "through the grace of God," he shall work upon it as long as he lives. "For the more I labor at it, the more it delights me; just as a gallant knight who loves his profession the longer he continues in it, so much the more delectable it appears." He was quite certain, too, that his book would be a very interesting one; and a favorite, he thinks, with all good people. He says he well knows that when he is dead and gone "this grand and noble history will be in much fashion, and all noble and valiant persons will take pleasure in it." It is about five hundred years since this book was written, and his words have so far come true that it is still a very favorite and attractive book; and we of the nineteenth century can still take almost as much pleasure in it as the "noble and valiant persons" for whom he wrote it.

English people generally take pride and delight in reading and hearing of the reign of Edward III., because of the famous battles in which they beat the French, and of which Froissart gives such animated descriptions, that, however much we may hate war and battles, we cannot help enjoying these.—GUEST.

## The most important events of Edward's reign were connected with the French war, usually known in history as the Hundred Years' War.

The war with Scotland had brought with it a quarrel with the French kings, who saw in the struggle of England with the Scotch an opportunity for getting hold of Aquitaine, the only English possession left in France. To meet this Edward III. laid claim to the crown of France itself, in right of his mother, who was the daughter of a French king. So began a war which was to last more than a hundred years. At first Edward had small success, as

he trusted in foreign soldiers and foreign princes whom he hired with money; but at last he threw himself on England alone, landed with an English army in Normandy, and marched upon Paris. He was forced however to fall back, and was pursued by the king of France, Philippe of Valois, as far as the Somme, where he was all but cut off. Luckily he found a ford, and was able to get across into the province of Ponthieu, where he encamped at the village of Creci or Cressy.—GREEN.

The following is Froissart's description of the battle of Cressy as abridged by an English writer:

### BATTLE OF CRESSY.

Froissart says that in this battle the king of England had not more than an eighth part of the forces which the king of France had, but they were fine soldiers, and excellently disciplined. There were more than 5,000 of the far-famed English archers. The king of France, however, had 15,000 Genoese with their cross-bows, on whom he depended a great deal, besides immense numbers of Frenchmen, all eager for the fight. But Froissart tells us that "no man, unless he had been present, can describe truly the confusion of that day, especially the bad management and disorder of the French, whose troops were out of number."

Before the battle began Edward "rode at a foot's pace through all the ranks, encouraging the army, and entreating that they would guard his honor and defend his right; so sweetly and with such a cheerful countenance did he speak that all who had been before dispirited were directly comforted by hearing him."

The young Prince of Wales, surrounded by many gallant knights, had command of the first battalion. When all were duly arranged the English army "seated themselves on the ground, with their helmets and bows before them, that they might be the fresher when their enemies should arrive." The king overlooked all from a little hill near.

Before long the great and tumultuous French army approached, longing for the battle, but obeying no commands, and keeping no order. "As soon as the king of France came in sight of the English his blood began to boil," and he ordered the Genoese bowmen forward. "During this time," says Froissart, "a heavy rain

fell, accompanied by thunder, and a very terrible eclipse of the sun; and before this rain a great flight of crows hovered in the air, over all those battalions, making a loud noise. Shortly afterward it cleared up, and the sun shone very bright, but the French had it in their faces, and the English in their backs."

Now came the meeting of the impulsive, excitable Italians with the dogged, undemonstrative English. "When the Genoese were assembled together, and began to approach, they made a great leap and cry to abash the Englishmen, but they stood still and stirred not for all that. Then the Genoese a second time made another leap and a fell cry, and stepped forward a little, and the Englishmen removed not one foot; thirdly, again they leaped and cried, and went forth till they came within shot, then they shot fiercely with their cross-bows. Then the English archers stepped forth one pace, and let their arrows fly so hotly and so thick that it seemed snow. When the Genoese felt the arrows piercing through heads, arms, and breasts, many of them cast down their cross-bows, and did cut their strings, and returned discomfited. . . . In the English army there were some Cornish and Welsh men on foot who had armed themselves with large knives; these, advancing through the ranks of the men-at-arms and archers, who made way for them, came upon the French when they were in this danger, and, falling upon earls, barons, knights, and squires, slew many."

One of the allies of the French, who fought very bravely on their side, was the blind king of Bohemia. When he heard that the order for the battle was given, he said to his attendants, "'Gentlemen, you are all my people, my friends, and brethren at arms this day; therefore, as I am blind, I request of you to lead me so far into the engagement that I may strike one stroke with my sword.' The knights replied that they would directly lead him forward; and in order that they might not lose him in the crowd, they fastened all the reins of their horses together, and put the king at their head, that he might gratify his wish, and advanced toward the enemy. . . . The king rode in among the enemy and made good use of his sword, for he and his companions fought most gallantly. They advanced so far that they were all slain, and on the morrow they were found on the ground with their horses all tied together."

In the thick of the fight the battalion of the prince of Wales was hard pressed and in great danger. A knight rode off in all

haste to the king to entreat him for assistance. "The king replied, 'Is my son dead, unhorsed, or so badly wounded that he cannot support himself?' 'Nothing of the sort, thank God,' rejoined the knight, 'but he is in so hot an engagement that he has great need of your help.' The king answered, 'Now, Sir Thomas, return back to those that sent you, and tell them from me not to send again for me this day, or expect that I shall come, let what will happen, as long as my son has life; and say that I command them to let the boy win his spurs; for I am determined, if it please God, that all the glory and honor of this day shall be given to him and to those into whose care I have intrusted him.' The knight returned to his lords with the king's answer, which mightily encouraged them, and made them repent they had ever sent such a message."

At last the battle ended; the French king had to flee, and his huge army was broken to pieces. When Edward saw his noble young son return to him victorious he "embraced him in his arms and kissed him, saying, 'Sweet son, God give you good perseverance; you are my son, for most loyally have you acquitted yourself this day; you are worthy to be a sovereign.' The prince bowed down very low and humbled himself, giving all honor to the king his father."—M. J. GUEST, *Lectures on English History.*

Charles Knight closes his description of the battle of Cressy in this manner:

"Thus ended the great day of Cressy—a day of terrible slaughter —preceded by weeks of devastation, and followed up by years of contest and suffering. But it was a day on which the steady courage that was the result of the comparatively free condition of the yeomen of England was first asserted on a great scale. From that time the feudal pretension of the iron-clad knights to be the only soldiers was practically at an end. The battles of England were thenceforth to be won by bow and bill. When the ancient weapons were exchanged for the matchlock and the pike, and these again for the rifle and the bayonet, the same spirit which made every yeoman in that field of Cressy stir not one foot while the great plain before them was filled with ten times their number of men-at-arms, has carried their descendants through many a desperate struggle, and showed from age to age 'the majesty with which the British soldier fights.'"

After the victory of Cressy Edward marched on and laid siege to Calais. It was bravely defended, but at length was forced by famine to surrender. Edward "drove out all the inhabitants who would not swear allegiance to him, planted English in their place, gave to these valuable privileges, and girt the city round with such strong defenses as to show he wanted to make and keep it purely English. In time it came to be looked upon as a part of the kingdom of England." *

While Edward was thus engaged, the Scots, under David, the son of Robert Bruce, fell upon the north of England with a large force. They were met by Philippa, the queen, at a place near Durham, called Neville's Cross, where they were thoroughly beaten. King David was himself taken prisoner, and kept in England for eleven years.

Soon after his return from the taking of Calais Edward instituted the Order of the Garter. What is known of its origin may be gathered from the following notices:

### THE ORDER OF THE GARTER.

The victory of Cressy had produced no actual result in the great controversy between the two kingdoms beyond the acquisition of Calais; but the character of the king and the character of the nation were elevated. The yeoman had taken his proper position side by side with the knight. Cressy became a rallying cry whenever Englishmen thought of battle and dominion. The false ambition engendered a true heroism. Edward was naturally ready to associate the memory of his great victory with the ostentation of chivalry. He had summoned illustrious knights to a feast of the Round Table at Windsor, before his invasion of France. He now solemnly established the statutes of the Order of the Garter. In 1349 there was high festival at Windsor; when the king and twenty-five companions of the order, "all clothed in mantles of

* Rowley's "Rise of the People."

fine woolen cloth of blue color, powdered with garters, and each wearing the great collar of the order," went in solemn procession to the chapel of St. George, where the ceremonies of installation were performed. St. George, the archbishop of Alexandria—whose ecclesiastical career of violence and rapacity had been forgotten after the lapse of seven centuries, when the Crusaders adopted him for their saint—St. George the victorious, with all those fabulous accomplishments which made him the dragon-slayer and virgin-deliverer, became the patron of the Order of the Garter and the tutelar saint of England. The "Black Book" of the order, written in the days of Henry VIII., says that St. George in a dream inspired the lion-hearted Richard to buckle a leather on the legs of each of his most favored companions in arms; and that Edward, therefore, made the Garter the badge of his knightly order—a symbol of fellowship in chivalry. The romantic legends connect the emblem of the order with the story which Froissart tells, "how the king of England was in amours with the countess of Salisbury;" and how the noble woman repressed his unhallowed passion. "Evil be to him that evil thinks," says the legend, became the motto of the order, when the king picked up the garter of her whose "fresh beauty and goodly demeanor" were ever in his remembrance. It is "a vain and idle romance," say some solemn narrators; as if chivalry were not a perfect succession of vain and idle romances.—KNIGHT.

## EDWARD III. AND THE COUNTESS OF SALISBURY.

There is something more than pageantry and fighting in Froissart's story of Edward III. and the countess of Salisbury, viewed in connection with the Order of the Garter. How well the old chronicler tells of the unhallowed love of the king, and the constancy of the noble lady, when she welcomed him in the castle that she had been bravely defending against her enemies! "As soon as the lady knew of the king's coming, she set open the gates, and came out so richly beseen, that every man marveled of her beauty, and could not cease to regard her nobleness with her great beauty, and the gracious words and countenance she made. When she came to the king, she kneeled down to the earth, thanking him of his succors, and so led him into the castle to make him cheer and honor, as she

that could right do it. Every man regarded her marvelously; the king himself could not withhold his regarding of her, for he thought that he never saw before so noble nor so fair a lady; he was stricken therewith to the heart, with a sparkle of fine love that endured long after; he thought no lady in the world so worthy to be loved as she. Thus they entered into the castle hand-in-hand; the lady led him first into the hall, and after into the chamber, nobly appareled. The king regarded so the lady, that she was abashed. At last he went to a window to rest, and so fell into a great study. The lady went about to make cheer to the lords and knights that were there, and commanded to dress the hall for dinner. When she had all devised and commanded, then she came to the king with a merry cheer, who was then in a great study, and she said, 'Dear sir, why do ye study so for? Your grace not displeased, it appertaineth not to you so to do; rather ye should make good cheer and be joyful, seeing you have chased away your enemies, who durst not abide you; let other men study for the remnant.' Then the king said, 'Ah, dear lady, know for truth that since I entered into the castle there is a study come into my mind, so that I cannot choose but to muse, nor I cannot tell what shall fall thereof; put it out of my heart I cannot.' 'Ah, sir,' quoth the lady, 'ye ought always to make good cheer to comfort therewith your people. God hath aided you so in your business, and hath given you so great graces, that ye be the most doubted [feared] and honored prince in all Christendom; and if the king of Scots have done you any despite or damage, ye may well amend it when it shall please you, as ye have done divers times er [ere] this. Sir, leave your musing, and come into the hall, if it please you; your dinner is all ready.' 'Ah, fair lady,' quoth the king, 'other things lieth at my heart that ye know not of; but surely the sweet behaving, the perfect wisdom, the good grace, nobleness, and excellent beauty that I see in you hath so surprised my heart, that I cannot but love you, and without your love I am but dead.' Then the lady said, 'Ah! right noble prince, for God's sake mock nor tempt me not. I cannot believe that is true that ye say, or that so noble a prince as ye be would think to dishonor me, and my lord my husband, who is so valiant a knight, and hath done your grace so good service, and as yet lieth in prison for your quarrel. Certainly, sir, ye should in this case have but a small praise, and nothing the better thereby. I had never, as yet, such a thought in my heart, nor, I trust in God,

never shall have, for no man living. If I had any such intention, your grace ought not only to blame me, but also to punish my body, yea, and by true justice to be dismembered.' Herewith the lady departed from the king, and went into the hall to haste the dinner. When she returned again to the king, and brought some of his knights with her, and said, 'Sir, if it please you to come into the hall, your knights abideth for you to wash; ye have been too long fasting.' Then the king went into the hall, and washed, and sat down among his lords, and the lady also. The king ate little; he sat still musing, and, as he durst, he cast his eyes upon the lady. Of his sadness his knights had marvel, for he was not accustomed so to be; some thought it was because the Scots were escaped from him. All that day the king tarried there, and wist not what to do; sometimes he imagined that truth and honor defended him to set his heart on such a case, to dishonor such a lady and such a knight as her husband was, who had always well and truly served him; on the other part, love so constrained him, that the power thereof surmounted honor and truth. Thus the king debated to himself all that day and all that night; in the morning he arose, and dislodged all his host, and drew after the Scots to chase them out of his realm. Then he took leave of the lady, saying, 'My dear lady, to God I commend you till I return again, requiring you to advise you otherwise than ye have said to me.' 'Noble prince,' quoth the lady, 'God, the Father glorious, be your conduct, and put you out of all villain thoughts. Sir, I am, and ever shall be, ready to do you pure service, to your honor and to mine.' Therewith the king departed all abashed."

If we carry on the legend to the belief that the king subdued his passions, and afterward met the noble woman in all honor and courtesy, we may understand the motto of the garter—"Evil be to him that evil thinks."—Condensed from FROISSART.

## THE BLACK DEATH.

Everybody is very much interested about the battles of Cressy and Poitiers, but very few histories tell us much about what happened in the ten years which came between them; just as if the history of England was the history of kings, princes, and soldiers, and not of any other people. But it was during that time that the first of those terrible pestilences came which were in reality far

more important than either of those famous fights. A few thousand men were killed in the battles; but without any fighting at all there were killed by this awful disease more than 2,000,000 people in England alone.

Though we know very little about it, we can imagine a great deal—a great deal of the terror and misery and pain, and the long sorrow afterward. The sickness was so virulent that few who were attacked by it lived more than three days; it was called by the dreadful name of the Black Death. It is so awful that we can hardly realize it. Let us try to think what it would be if in every house only one person died; what wailing and woe there would arise. But it was worse than that. If there were six people in a family, three of those would have died. If there were 200 people living in a village, 100 of them would have died. Of course it was not literally true that half the people in every house died; it is more likely that in one house none might die, and in another all; but taking all together there seems hardly any doubt that half the people of England died of this frightful plague; in some places more, and in some less.

More than two thirds of the clergymen in Norfolk and in Yorkshire died, so that it was almost impossible to get anyone to read the service; and the bishops were obliged to make quite young boys rectors of parishes, or the churches must have been shut up. In the town of Yarmouth, which was a flourishing fishing-town then, as it is now, more than 7,000 people were buried in one year, so that most of the houses were left empty and desolate, and gradually fell into decay. Nearly 200 years afterward there were still gardens and bare spaces where there had formerly been houses full of happy people.—M. J. GUEST.

For a few years after the Black Death there was much "misery in the land," and men thought of other things than fighting with France. But in 1355 the war began again. The following year another great victory—that of Poitiers—was gained by the English. Prince Edward, now known as the Black Prince, was at the head of the English force; and the French king, John, at the head of his own troops. This time the army of the Black Prince

was small—barely 12,000; while the French king had more than 60,000 men.

### THE BATTLE OF POITIERS.

As the English army marched in the direction of Poitiers they wist not truly where the Frenchmen were; but they supposed they were not far off, for they could find no more forage, whereby they had great default of victual in their host; and some of them repented that they had destroyed so much as they had done before. It was late in the night of Saturday, the 16th of September, that a part of the English who had been sent forward in advance of the army, "saw the great battle of the king; they saw all the field covered with men-of-arms." After a little skirmish, "which these English could not forbear," they "returned again to the prince and showed him all that they saw and knew, and said that the French host was a great number of people. 'Well,' said the prince, 'in the name of God let us now study how we shall fight with them at our advantage.' That night the Englishmen lodged in a strong place among hedges, vines, and bushes; and their host was well watched."

On the French side, the king and his four sons, having been houseled, that is to say, having received the communion, drew forth his army into the field. "Then trumpets blew up through the host, and every man mounted on horseback, and went into the field, where they saw the king's banner wave with the wind. There might have been seen great nobles of fair harness, (armor,) and rich armory of banners and pennons; for there was all the flower of France; there was none durst abide at home, without he would be shamed forever." Three knights having been sent to learn the array and power of the English, said on their return, "Sir, we have seen the Englishmen; by estimation they be two thousand men-of-arms, and four thousand archers, and a fifteen hundred of other: howbeit, they be in a strong place; and, as far as we can imagine, they are in one battle: howbeit, they be wisely ordered, and along the way they have fortified strongly the hedges and bushes; one part of their archers are along by the hedges, so that none can go nor ride that way, but must pass by them; and that way must ye go, an ye purpose to fight with them. In this hedge there is but one entry and one issue by likelihood that four

horsemen may ride a-front. At the end of this hedge whereas no man can go nor ride, there be men-of-arms afoot, and archers afore them, in manner of a herse, so that they will not lightly be discomfited." Such was the English position.

The cardinal, Perigord, who had been sent by the pope to endeavor to make peace between the king of France and his enemies, passed to and fro between the hosts, thinking, says Froissart, "by his preaching to pacify the parties." Short and abrupt was the answer he received on each side. "Return whither ye will," said the Frenchman impatiently; "bring hither no more words of treaty or peace; and if ye love yourself, depart shortly." Hastening then to the prince, he said, evidently with deep emotion, "Sir, do what you can; there is no remedy but to abide the battle, for I can find none accord in the French king." The prince simply and cheerfully answered, "The same is our intent and all our people: God help the right!" As the cardinal disappeared, the prince encouraged his men with brave words. "Now, sirs," he said, "though we be but a small company, as in regard to the puissance of our enemies, let us not be abashed therefore; for the victory lieth not in the multitude of people, but whereas God will send it. If it fortune that the journey be ours, we shall be the most honored people of all the world; and if we die in our right quarrel, I have the king, my father, and brethren, and also ye have good friends and kinsmen: these shall revenge us. Therefore, sirs, for God's sake, I require you to do your devoirs this day; for if God be pleased, and St. George, this day ye shall see me a good knight." "And," continues Froissart, "these words and such other that the prince spake, comforted all his people."

The battle began on all sides as the battalions of the marshal of France approached, evidently in order to break the array of the archers. "They entered on horseback into the way where the great hedges were on both sides set full of archers. As soon as the men-of-arms entered, the archers began to shoot on both sides, and did slay and hurt horses and knights; so that the horses, when they felt the sharp arrows, they would in no wise go forward, but drew back and flung, and took on so fiercely, that many of them fell on their masters, so that for the press they could not rise again, insomuch that the marshal's battle could never come at the prince. Certain knights and squires, that were well horsed, passed through the archers, and thought to approach to the prince, but they could

not. . . . So within a short space the marshal's battles were discomfited, for they fell one upon another, and could not go forth; and the Frenchmen that were behind, and could not get forward, recoiled back and came on the battle of the Duke of Normandy, the which was great and thick, and were afoot. But anon, they began to open behind; for when they knew that the marshal's battle was discomfited they took their horses and departed, he that might best; also they saw a rout of Englishmen coming down a little mountain a-horseback, and many archers with them, who broke in on the side of the duke's battle.

"True to say, the archers did their company that day great advantage, for they shot so thick that the Frenchmen wist not on what side to take heed; and, little and little, the Englishmen won ground on them; and when the men-of-arms of England saw that the marshal's battle was discomfited, and the duke's battle began to disorder and open, they leaped on their horses, the which they had ready by them. Then they assembled together and cried, 'St. George for Guinea!' and the Lord Chandos said to the prince, 'Sir, take your horse and ride, for then this journey is yours. God is this day in your hands—get us to the French king's battle, for there lieth all the sore of the matter. I think verily by his valiantness he will not fly; I trust we shall have him, by the grace of God and St. George, so he be well fought withal; and, sir, I heard you say that this day I shall see you a good knight.' The prince said, 'Let us go forth; ye shall not see me this day return back;' and said, 'Advance, banner, in the name of God and St. George!'" Onward the little army went, routing and chasing the enemy to the gates of Poitiers. They began in the morning and ended at noon, and in that short space of time there was slain "all the flower of France; and there was taken with the king and Lord Philip, his son, a seventeen earls, besides barons, knights, and squires." Indeed, "when every man was come from the chase, they had *twice as many prisoners as they were in number in all;* then it was counseled among them because of the great charge and doubt to keep so many that they should put many of them to ransom incontinent (immediately) in the field, and so they did; and the prisoners found the English and Gascons right courteous. There were many that day put to ransom and let go, all only on their promise of faith and truth to return again, between that and Christmas, to Bordeaux with their ransoms. Then that night they lay in the field beside whereas the battle had been: some

unarmed them, but not all; and unarmed all their prisoners, and every man made good cheer to his prisoner; for that day whosoever took any prisoner he was clear his, and might quit or ransom him at his pleasure. All such as were there with the prince were all made rich with honors and goods, as well by ransoming of prisoners as by winning of gold, silver, plate, jewels, that was there found."

That night the prince of Wales made a supper in his lodging to the French king, and to the great lords that were prisoners. "When evening was come," writes Froissart, "the prince of Wales gave a supper in his pavilion to the king of France, and to the greater part of the princes and barons who were prisoners. The prince himself served the king's table as well as the others with every mark of humility, and would not sit down at it in spite of all his entreaties for him so to do, saying that 'he was not worthy of such an honor, nor did it appertain to him to seat himself at the table of so great a king, or of so valiant a man as he had shown himself by his actions that day.' He added also, with a noble air, 'Dear sir, do not make a poor meal because the Almighty God has not gratified your wishes in the event of this day; for be assured that my lord and father will show you every honor and friendship in his power, and will arrange your ransom so reasonably that you will henceforward always remain friends. In my opinion you have cause to be glad that the success of this battle did not turn out as you desired, for you have this day acquired such high renown for prowess that you have surpassed all the best knights on your side. I do not, dear sir, say this to flatter you, for all those of our side who have seen and observed the actions of each party have unanimously allowed this to be your due, and decree you the prize and garland for it.' At the end of this speech there were murmurs of praise heard from every one, and the French said the prince had spoken nobly and truly, and that he would be one of the most gallant princes in Christendom if God should grant him life to pursue his career of glory."

### PARLIAMENTARY PROGRESS DURING EDWARD'S REIGN.

On the whole, the reign of Edward III. was a very healthy time for Parliament. Early in it the division of that body into two houses took place. The knights of the shire united themselves

with the citizens and burgesses to form the Lower House. The bishops and abbots joined with the lay peers to form the Upper House. In Edward III.'s reign, also, the practice became usual of making grants of money only in return for a promise to redress grievances; and it was at the same time that the uncertain rights of being alone able to grant money to the king, and having a voice in public affairs, became almost real. During the war with France King Edward, wishing to get the Commons to approve of what he was doing, asked their advice about the war. At first they answered that they were too simple to deal with such high matters; but they were afterward bold enough to give an opinion in favor of peace. In this way they came to have a real right to talk about all questions of state, and give their views about them. After a time, too, the Commons got an important voice in law-making; laws were now made by the king "by the assent," or "assent and prayer," of the great men and Commons of his kingdom.

One other great privilege the Lower House gained in this reign —that of *impeaching*—that is, of bringing to trial before the Upper House the servants of the crown who seemed to them to have done wrong. The assembly that first used this power is known as the "Good Parliament," which sat in 1376. There was, for the last few years of Edward III.'s life, a very angry feeling throughout the country. The king, grown old in mind before his time, had fallen into evil hands. There were people about him who were making themselves rich out of the national purse. The Black Prince was dying; and his brother, John of Gaunt, was suspected of plotting against the rights of his son, Richard of Bordeaux. A bad woman, Alice Ferrers, ruled in the king's palace. Many men in power stopped at no wickedness in trying to gain their evil ends. So from all these things grave mischief was being wrought to the nation. Under the guidance of one Peter De la Mare—the first who held the office of Speaker, though he was not called by that name—the Commons at once picked out for punishment the worst of the transgressors—Lord Latimer, the chamberlain, and a certain Richard Lyons. These they charged with having bought up the king's debts at a low price, and then got payment in full from the royal revenue; with taking bribes from the king's enemies; and with seizing for their own use sums that ought by right to have been paid into the king's treasury. The rage against them was so great that their patron, John of Gaunt, was powerless to check it.

They were thrown into prison; and when the crimes laid to their charge had been proved, the lords sentenced Latimer to be imprisoned and fined as the king should think fit, and to lose his office, and Lyons to be stripped of his wealth and sent to the Tower. Alice Ferrers, too, was to forfeit her property and be banished. There can hardly be a doubt that the Black Prince and William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, who had once been chancellor, heartily forwarded these doings of the Commons. Indeed, it is very likely that they planned and set them in motion. In any case, the Commons had clearly a very strong affection for the prince's family, for on his dying, (Trinity Sunday, 1376,) when Parliament was still sitting, they prayed that his son Richard should be brought before them as heir apparent, which prayer the king granted. Finally, as a means of guarding the nation from such men as Latimer and Lyons for the future, they entreated the king to take into his council a body of lords on whom they believed that they could rely. This prayer also was granted; and after a session of two months—the longest yet known—the "Good Parliament" went its ways.—ROWLEY.

### DEATH OF THE BLACK PRINCE—DEATH OF EDWARD III.

The death of the Black Prince is thus recorded in the Chronicles of Froissart:

In the year 1376, on Trinity Sunday, that flower of English knighthood, the Lord Edward of England, Prince of Wales and of Aquitaine, departed this life in the palace of Westminster, near London; his body was embalmed, placed in a leaden coffin, and kept until the ensuing Michaelmas, in order that it might be buried with greater pomp and magnificence when the Parliament assembled in London.

In the "History of the Kings of England" we read as follows:

The Black Prince was universally regretted, and the Parliament, as a mark of their esteem, attended his funeral. Over his grave is erected a stately monument of gray marble, with his portraiture of copper-gilt; the ends and sides are garnished with escutcheons, also of copper, enameled with his arms and devices, and superscribed

with the words *Houmont* and *Ich Dien*. On an iron bar over the tomb are placed the helmet and crest, coat of mail, and gantlets; and on a pillar, his shield of arms, richly diapered with gold. On a fillet of brass is circumscribed a French epitaph, and on the south side of the foot, and north side of the tomb, are verses in that language. He was called the Black Prince from the color of his armor. He is described by historians as the most excellent prince England had ever produced, and little inferior in virtue and talent to the Roman Scipio. He was a good soldier, a great general, brave without fierceness, bold in battle, but affable in conversation, and of a most modest demeanor. Ever submissive and respectful to the king his father, whom he never once disobliged. Generous, liberal, pleased with rewarding merit wherever he found it, he wanted no qualification to form a perfect hero. Such is the character given of this renowned warrior.

King Edward followed his son to the grave before a year was over. He died on the 21st of June, 1377, with none to soothe his last hours but Alice Ferrers. She took the ring from his finger, and the mighty victor was alone with the all-conqueror.*

> "Death came dryvinge after, and al to duste passhed
> Kynges and knyghtes, kaysers and popes." †

Southey, in his sketch of Edward's life, says:

"Never was there a king in whose history the will of Providence may seem to have been more clearly manifested: so greatly had his victories exceeded all bounds of reasonable hope, so much had his reverses surpassed all reasonable apprehension! Well might Edward have exclaimed with the preacher "that all is vanity," when he had survived the wife of his bosom, the son of his youth and of his proudest and dearest hopes, his prosperity, his popularity, the respect of his chiefs, and the love of his people; for, after the loss of his son, his moral and intellectual strength gave way, and he fell under subjection to an artful and rapacious woman. In this, however, posterity has been just, that it has judged of him, not by the failure of his fortunes and the weakness of his latter

* Knight. † Piers Ploughman.

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